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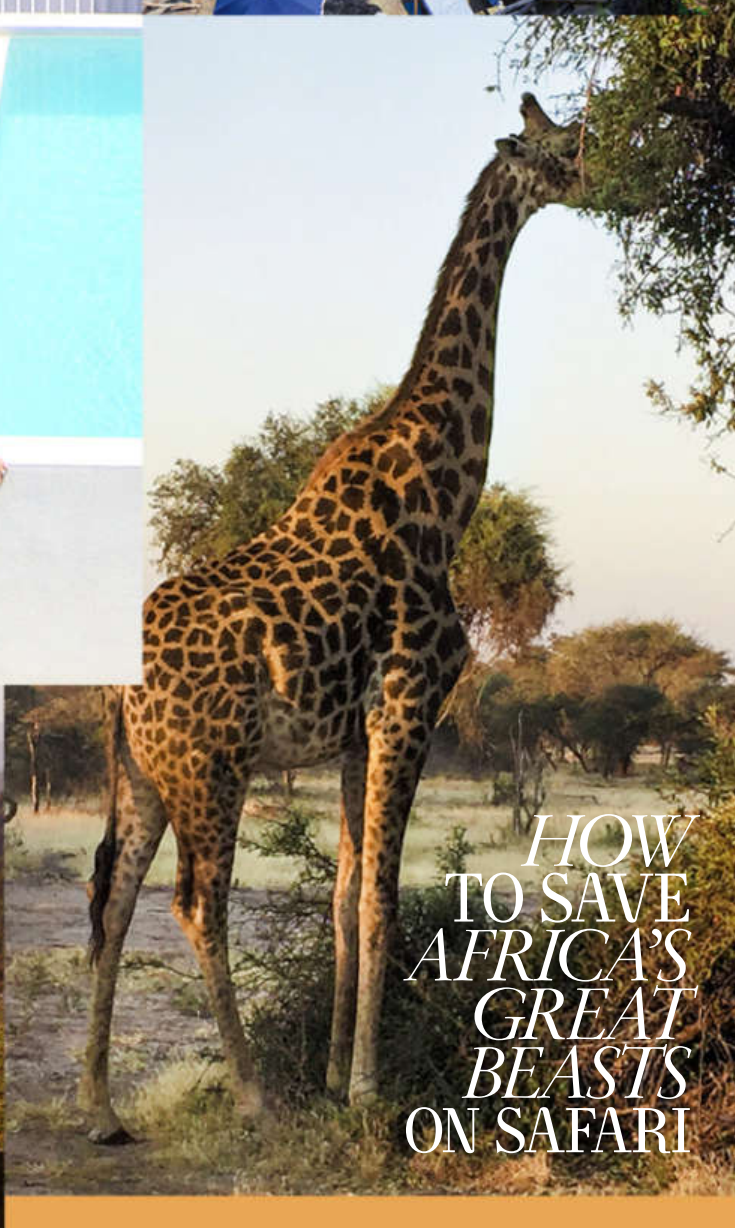
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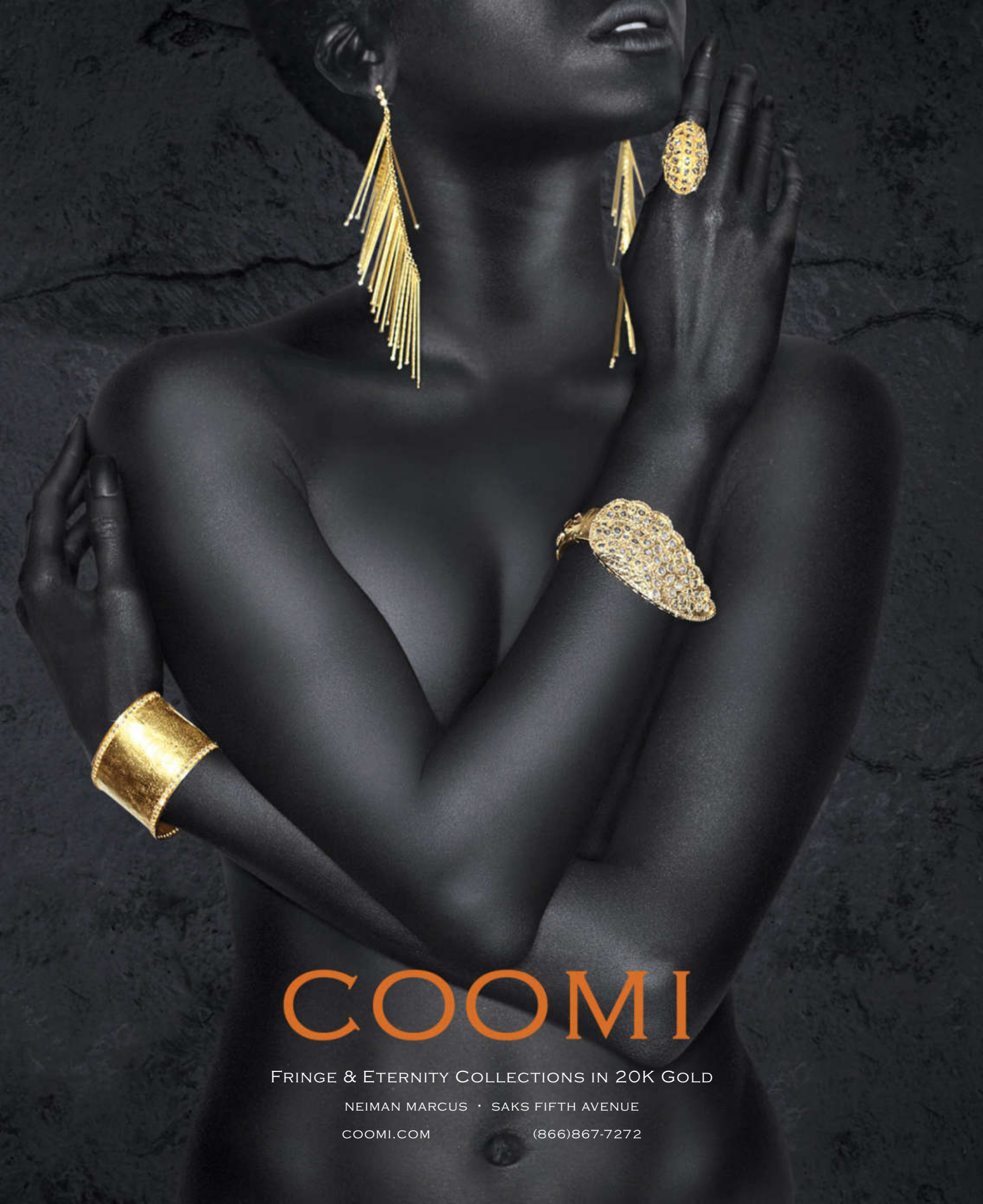

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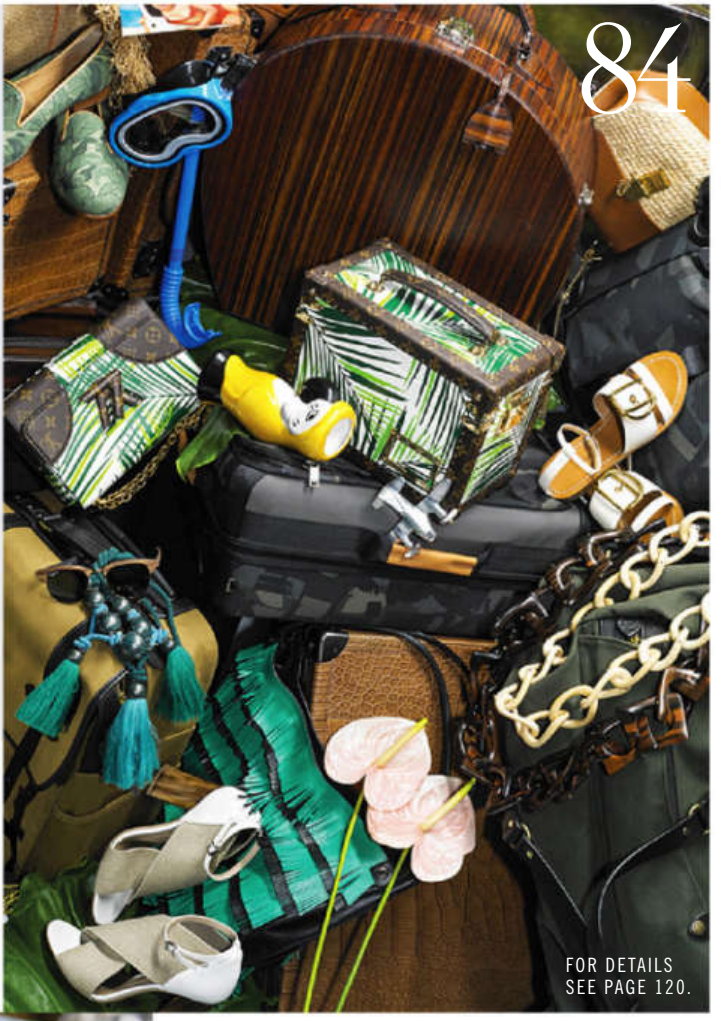
Ludwig Bemelmans, the creator of Madeline, was for nearly three decades a regular contributor to *Town & Country*. He produced roughly 50 articles and 500 illustrations for the magazine, including this cover from February 1940. In a tribute, W.A. Powers, his longtime editor, wrote that he'd been advised by a colleague, "Don't try to edit Bemmy too much. If you put him into correct English, it won't be Bemelmans. It's like trying to take the smell out of Liderkranz cheese."

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ESTABLISHED 1846





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ON OUR COVER: *CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:* THE OCEAN REEF HOUSE AT THE AMILLA FUSHI RESORT IN THE MALDIVES; PORTO ERCOLE, TUSCANY, JULY 1991; A GIRAFFE GRAZES NEAR THE EDGE OF THE OKAVANGO DELTA IN BOTSWANA; BREAKFAST WITH A VIEW AT 360° LETI, IN THE HIMALAYAS.

COVER, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AMILLA FUSHI, BAA ATOLL, MALDIVES; SLIM AARONS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA; JULIAN KINGMA. THIS PAGE: PAUL GRAVES (ACCESSORIES); JULIAN KINGMA (FOOD)



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Go online for historic castles to rent on Airbnb.com, a peek inside the Four Seasons jet, and the best places to hit the slopes (like Beaver Creek, below*). Then follow us on Instagram: @townandcountrytravel.*





A special pullout guide.

NELSON GARRIDO (POOL); TPG/GETTY IMAGES (MODEL); KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA (GIRAFFES); KIRSTEN HOLTZ (PLANE); JACK AFFLECK (BEAVER CREEK)



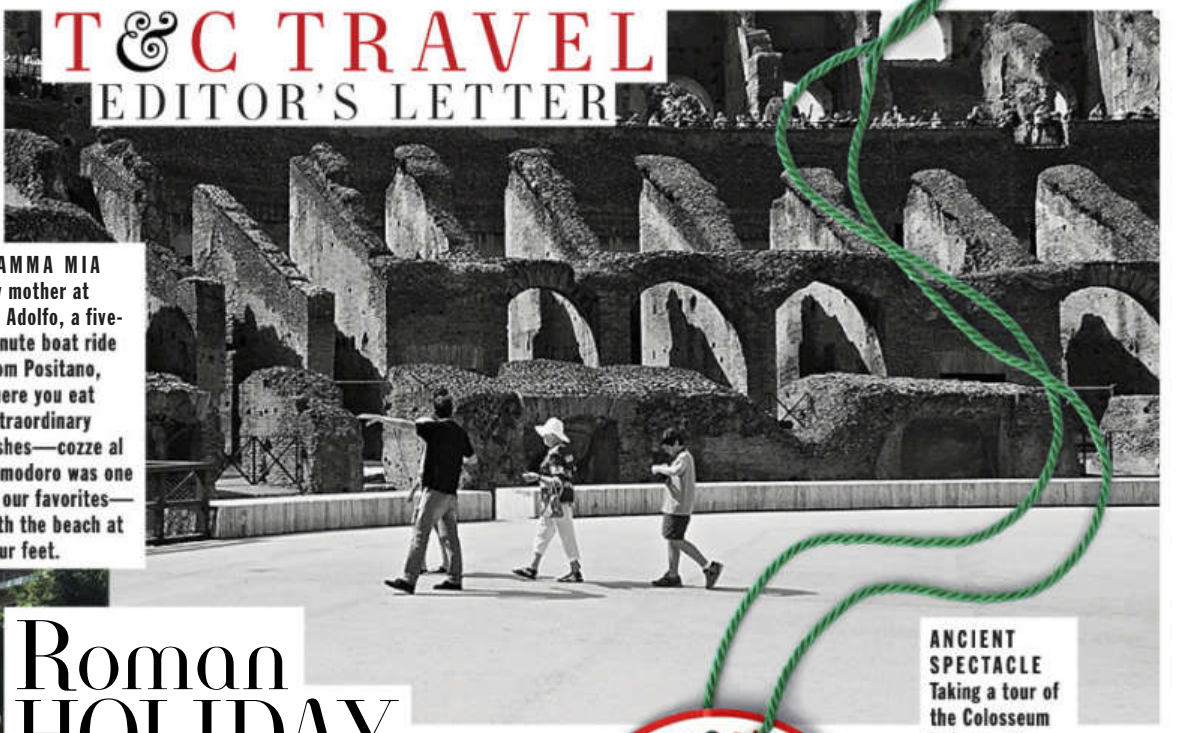
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MAMMA MIA
My mother at Da Adolfo, a five-minute boat ride from Positano, where you eat extraordinary dishes—cozze al pomodoro was one of our favorites—with the beach at your feet.



ANCIENT SPECTACLE
Taking a tour of the Colosseum in Rome; the Sirenuse gets everything right, including its luggage tags.

Roman HOLIDAY

Last July my wife and I decided that our kids—six, nine, and 12—had finally reached an age when a trip to Italy would not be more pain than gain, especially if we could convince my sprightly 84-year-old mother to join us. The itinerary included three days in Rome at the Aldrovandi Villa Borghese—a beautifully restored palazzo with a cool Mediterranean-blue pool—and five in Positano at the Sirenuse, which is, quite simply, paradise. (See our special pullout guide.) Plus, I explained, we'd be eating like Lucullus, slaking our thirst at the end of each day with Aperol Spritzes, and sleeping till noon. Who could say no to that?

JAYFIELDEN@HEARST.COM
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SUN QUENCHER
Rome was suffering a heat wave when we were there, but no one at the Aldrovandi pool seemed to notice.





SOMETHING SIMPLE
Lo Scoglio, which sits on stilts in a cove, is famous for serving perhaps the best zucchini pasta in Amalfi.





WATER WORLD
Franco's Bar (*left*), which commands a panoramic view from atop the town, opened at the Sirenuse this summer. Life at the hotel can be lived with just the bare necessities: a Riva, a bathing suit, and a hat.

BRITTANY MOLSON (HOTEL TAG, MATCHES); ROBERTO SALOMONE (FRANCO'S BAR)



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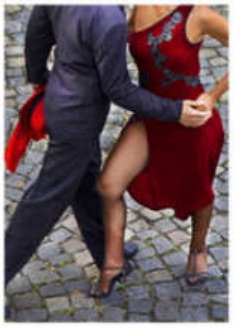


NASHVILLE, to experience some of the town's formidable dining scene.



THE BROADMOOR, IN COLORADO SPRINGS, is a big, beautiful, glamorous place. I'm going to catch a lunker at its new fishing camp.





MENDOZA AND BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA. Can't think of anything better than a week of asado, malbec, and tango.

ABU DHABI AND DUBAI for a week in October. We all are in need of a little extravagance in our lives.





SEA ISLAND, GEORGIA. It's my happy place.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ALAN COPSON/GETTY IMAGES; ROBERT HARDING WORLD IMAGERY/ALAMY; GRANT FAINT/GETTY IMAGES; JOSEPH PLOTZ/GETTY IMAGES; LYROKY/ALAMY; THE BROADMOOR; AMAN RESORTS



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KEVIN DOYLE

The author, who detailed his trek through the Himalayas for "Mountain Time" (page 76), wishes he could have written about the women of the Kumaon region. They dressed in the "most vibrant pinks and yellows," scavenged for wood, and did all the heavy lifting. "It was amazing and humbling to see," says Doyle, who has contributed to *GQ* and *Men's Journal*.



ALEX HALBERSTADT

"I remember being patted down by a drunk bouncer in a stairwell at 4:30 in the morning and thinking that I had never enjoyed Moscow more," says Halberstadt, who ate his way through the city of his youth for "The Maestros of Moscow" (page 108). To truly enjoy the Russian metropolis, he adds, one must "suspend judgment and caution." His forthcoming memoir is titled *Young Heroes of the Soviet Union*.



MARY KAYE SCHILLING

"Istanbul and Cappadocia are perfect bookends for a trip to Turkey—equally dazzling opposites," says Schilling, *T&C*'s deputy editor, who writes about both in "A Place Between Two Worlds" (page 92). "The word *magical* gets tossed around a lot in travel writing, but these places really do transport you. In an often disappointing world, they also remind you that humans are capable of incredible things."



MICHAEL WOLFF

The two-time National Magazine Award winner confesses to a little self-interest with "Advance Reservations" (page 100), his piece about the controversial renovation of the iconic Ritz Paris. "I write as both critic and guest," he says. "I would rather it stay the same than risk it changing to be better." Wolff is the author of *Television Is the New Television: The Unexpected Triumph of Old Media in the Digital Age*.



PAUL GRAVES

The photographer behind "Arrival Kit" (page 84) has been shooting his award-winning still lifes around the globe for 10 years. In our story he captures the would-be packing lists for four exotic destinations. "Are they packing or unpacking? It's hard to say, but the important thing is to start an adventure with some romantic individualism to make each journey memorable," says Graves, who lives on a boat in Paris.



MARIA ZIEGELBÖCK

"Being in Istanbul feels like traveling in a funny time machine, slipping through millennia, ancient cultures, and childhood fantasies," says the fourth-generation photographer, who shot "A Place Between Two Worlds" (page 92). "It's like a turbulent castle filled with excellent food, a Middle Ages with cash machines." Ziegelböck has shot for *Interview*, the *Sunday Times*, and *L'Officiel*.

EDWARD BURT (HALBERSTADT); CHERYL COLLINS (SCHILLING); ALEXANDER GOTTER (ZIEGELBÖCK); NAVARINO NARAH (DOYLE)


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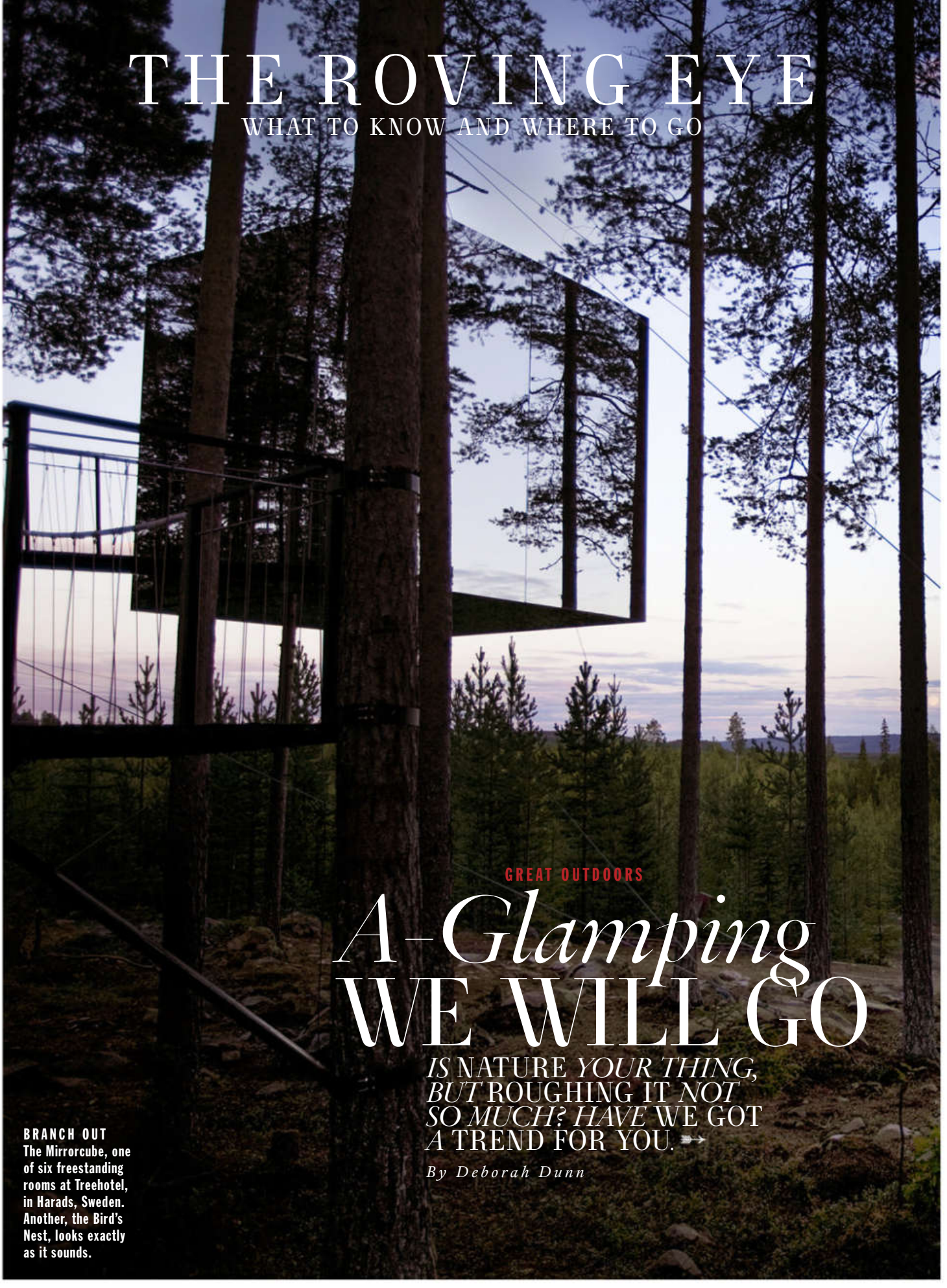
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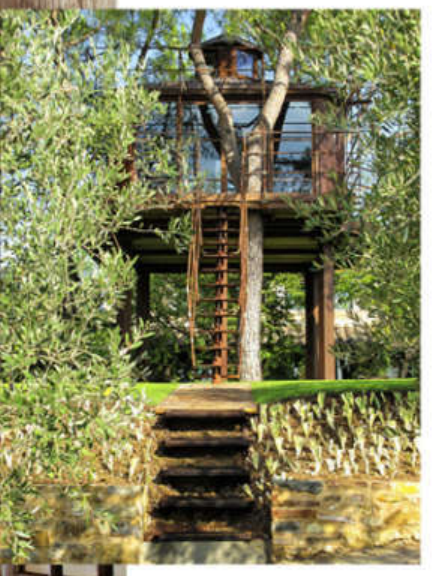
IS NATURE *YOUR THING, BUT* ROUGHING IT *NOT SO MUCH? HAVE* WE GOT *A* TREND FOR YOU.

By Deborah Dunn

BRANCH OUT
The Mirrorcube, one of six freestanding rooms at Treehotel, in Harads, Sweden. Another, the Bird's Nest, looks exactly as it sounds.

PETER LUNDSTROM, WDO-TREEHOTEL.SE





GOING UP? The treehouse at Casa Barthel (*below*) is 15 minutes from Florence. It has AC for summer, a fireplace for winter.



SAND CASTLE The floor at Casas Na Areia, in Portugal, is heated in winter. *Below:* A deluxe cabin at Paws Up, in Montana.

According to glamping experts—and there are a lot of them these days—the early practitioners of this **fusion of glamour and camping** were the British big game hunters of the early 20th century, who braved the East African bush with crates of champagne and tins of caviar. A century later the Brits are leading the luxury charge once again, this time minus the hunting rifles and pith helmets, and much closer to home.

Canopy & Stars (011-44-117-204-7830) is one of a handful of new online travel agencies that specialize in what was once an oxymoron: sumptuous roughing it. The Bristol-based company launched five years ago with just seven listings; today there are some 500, with more than half in the United Kingdom and the rest throughout Europe. Most places on the site opened within the last few years, and nearly all have private bathrooms, hot water, and any number of amenities (on-call massage therapists, fabulous meals prepared alfresco, gourmet picnic baskets with good wine). Tricked-out tents are to be had, of course, but let your imagination run wilder. "Treehouses are incredibly popular," says Tom Dixon, the company's managing director. These run the gamut from the shamelessly romantic (take an amorous soak in Harptree Court's copper tub) to the shamelessly indulgent (Chewton Glen's tree-manse, in Hampshire, runs more than $1,000 a night). On a wooded hilltop just outside Florence, the artful Treehouse at Casa Barthel has a small wooden kitchen and expansive views of the city; a pool and tennis court lie just beneath it.

If you're looking for something a wee bit more eccentric, Canopy & Stars also lists teepees, yurts, and, in the Highlands of Scotland, a 1950s fire truck renovated top to bottom, from the canvas tarp to the oak floors. Fans of time travel (or *Game of Thrones*) might prefer the company's thatch-roof roundhouse in Devon, which has a rough-hewn four-poster bed, thick duvets, and a firepit in the middle of the room. "An amazing, authentically Iron Age weekend," raved one online review of something we didn't even know there was a market for.

Canopy & Stars may be the biggest internet option in Europe, but some searching will yield smaller glamping gems, from **Casas Na Areia**, rustic-chic huts on the beach in Portugal, to the **Treehotel** in Swedish Lapland, a small colony of cutting-edge aeries designed by notable architects. In Ireland the folks behind the white glove Park Hotel Kenmare, on the Ring of Kerry, now have 15 cushy safari-style tents nearby, at **Dromquinna Manor**. And this past July a British chef and her husband set up **Fireflies & Figs**, which consists of two elegantly furnished yurts in an olive grove in Abruzzo, Italy, where guests are served alfresco three-course dinners four nights a week and ample breakfasts every day.

Despite all these options, which seem to be multiplying daily, supply is barely keeping up with demand. Search traffic has shot up, on average, 50 to 70 percent every month since 2012, according to Ryan Hutchings, the general manager of the U.S.-based **Glamping.com**, another new luxe-in-the-wild outfit, which has listings in North America, Africa, and parts of Europe. "Glamping is for people who want to experience being out in nature but who don't want to rough it anymore," Hutchings says. Given the wealth of alternatives, who would? «

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: NELSON GARRIDO; CANOPYANDSTARS.CO.UK; RESORTS AT PAWS UP



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UP ON THE ROOF
From left: The Norman's refurbished 1920s façade; the Brown TLV's sundeck features a Jacuzzi.

HEART OF *THE CITY*

THE VITALITY *OF* TEL AVIV *USED TO BE* A LOCAL SECRET. *NOW IT'S BECOMING* THE REASON TO GO.

By Debra Kamin

The first modern Hebrew city has always been aspirational. Barely 100 years old, **Tel Aviv** was built upon beachside dunes, its wide, leafy boulevards and renowned Bauhaus buildings making the city a dream literally risen from the sand. But despite youth and good looks, it has struggled to attract tourists. Many of its 2.5 million annual visitors simply pass through, pausing for a beach day before moving on to Israel's bigger historical draws.

As a result, there have always been two Tel Avivs: the city of the locals, its pulsing backstreets packed with cafés and culture, and the city of tourists, confined to a string of beachfront chain hotels. Now they're merging, thanks to chef-driven restaurants like HaBasta and North Abraxas, and thriving dance, music, and art scenes that are attracting a clientele with deep pockets and international tastes. To accommodate these luxury travelers, a handful of new hotels have opened in the city's urban heart, offering destination experiences as unique as the city itself. **The Norman**, once a temple to 1920s grandeur, has led the way, reimagining British Mandate refinement in three meticulously restored historic buildings (the 30 guestrooms and 20 suites all feature original tiling and wall frescoes). "Most of our guests don't go anywhere else in Israel," says managing director Olivier Heuchenne. On the roof, along with a sundeck that offers views of the skyline, sits the Tel Aviv branch of London's Dinings restaurant. Poolside Japanese tapas service might not have been among the dreams of Israel's pioneers as they distributed plots of land in a seashell lottery under the blazing Middle Eastern sun, but we suspect they'd appreciate the upgrade. FROM $340, THENORMAN.COM

For those who prefer a more immersive experience, there's the cozier **Brown TLV**. Owner Leon Avigad calls the decor an homage to the "faded glam" of 1970s Faye Dunaway. Located in one of Tel Aviv's gentrifying neighborhoods, the hotel highlights the city's energy, encouraging guests to have breakfast at area cafés, sweat alongside locals at a nearby gym, and scout celebrities at the bar on the hotel's sundeck. FROM $230, BROWNTLV.COM

It seems Tel Aviv, the city built from the sand, is finally growing beyond the beach—though if it's a seaside experience you want, the Brown TLV has a kid sister, the **Brown Beach House**, which opened in August and offers floor-to-ceiling Mediterranean views. FROM $290, BROWNHOTELS.COM «







PORT SIDE
From left: Jaffa by day; Onza's cauliflower, miso, and soy; Schindler Café.

JAFFA REDUX

Hit the beachfront when the sun goes down.

Tel Aviv evolved out of overcrowded Jaffa, the Bible-era enclave to its south. Come nightfall, the beachfront neighborhood is the city's latest hot spot, the stone alleys of its once shoddy flea market coming alive with twinkling lights and alfresco restaurants like **FleaMarket** and **Onza**, and the indoor **Schindler Café**, where the walls and ceilings are outfitted with light fixtures from the Czech factory of Oskar Schindler himself.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MOSH BENJAMIN; GILAD RADAT; ASAF LEES; PS-I/ALAMY; SIVAN ASKAYO

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Island TIME

A TRIO OF FRESH REASONS *TO VENTURE BACK TO* BERMUDA *AND THE* CARIBBEAN.

By Emily Saladino



MARCUS SAMUELSSON





Given the worldwide spread of helipads—lunch in Bhutan, anyone?—a Caribbean or Bermudian jaunt might seem a tad prosaic. But three new developments prove that white sands close to home are still white hot.

BERMUDA MARCUS' RESTAURANT

THE REASON Sharp-dressed Michelin man Marcus Samuelsson's eponymous establishment opened in May in the Fairmont Hamilton Princess Hotel, bringing panache to Bermuda's staid fine dining scene. Standout dishes include Bermuda carrots with tofu whip and lentil ragout.

AND THERE'S MORE... The iconic Fairmont's recent $90 million renovation included redoing the glittering Princess Marina. Sip a Dark and Stormy on the waterfront terrace, overlooking the site of the 2017 America's Cup.

ENTREES FROM $24, MARCUSBERMUDA.COM

ANGUILLA ZEMI BEACH HOUSE RESORT AND SPA

THE REASON Less than a year after Malliouhana's major renovation restored Reagan-era exuberance to western Anguilla, this boutique resort will debut on a limestone bedrock in Shoal Bay East, with a 400-foot stretch of powdery sand. All 69 guestrooms and suites have Instagrammable ocean views. (Two-bedroom, two-bath condos start at $1.9 million.)

AND THERE'S MORE... A spa and hammam to sweat out toxins after sampling the four bars and restaurants (the Rhum Room specializes in small batch spirits). ZEMIBEACH.COM





ST. KITTS CHRISTOPHE HARBOUR

THE REASON To the delight of yachters and those who hang out with them, the first phase of this $100 million, 300-berth marina opened in February—a convenient call between Antigua and St. Martin. The 2,500-acre development includes a members-only beach club.

AND THERE'S MORE... The Caribbean's first Park Hyatt opens on nearby Banana Bay in 2016, with 134 rooms, some of which have private rooftops overlooking the Narrows. An 18-hole golf course designed by Tom Fazio is due in 2017. CHRISTOPHEHARBOUR.COM





CITY LIGHTS The airy reception hall designed by Studio Milou, with raised promenade.

ASIA *MAJOR*

THE NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE OFFERS PLEASURES BEYOND ART.

By Kevin Conley

Singapore's Padang—the great lawn at the heart of the city—is fast becoming a destination for architecture buffs. Joining I.M. Pei's 70-story Swissôtel the Stamford and Norman Foster's spaceship-like Supreme Court building is the new **National Gallery Singapore**, a stunning centerpiece of the city-state's plans for the 21st century. The Paris-based firm Studio Milou Architecture and Singapore's CPG Consultants were tasked with merging two landmarks of British rule: the former Supreme Court building and the neighboring City Hall. The ingenious result (backed by a $394 million renovation fund) includes a rattanesque perforated steel structure that turns the upper stories into a dappled promenade. "The light here is harsh, vertical, and bright. You don't linger in it," says Jean François Milou. "But inside it's like being under a tree, making the museum the one place where you can find pleasure in the light."

The intention is to turn the vast space into the premier repository of Southeast Asian art. The collection so far falls short of that goal, but trust in the setting: Singapore trails only New York, London, and Hong Kong as a financial center, so it is fertile territory for swaggering collectors likely to make sizable donations to their local museum. In the meantime, indulge in this architectural highlight.

NATIONALGALLERY.SG «

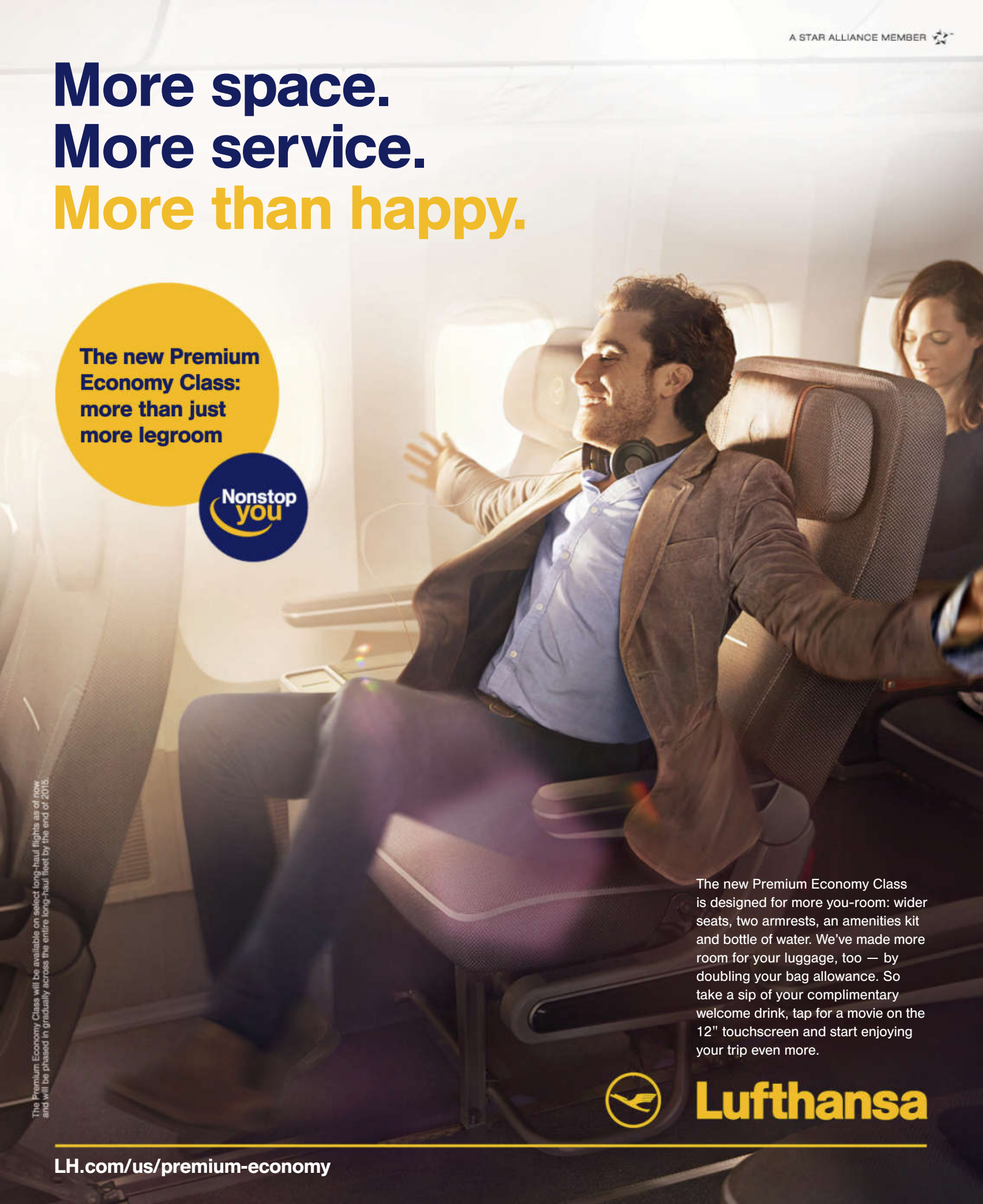
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE; © THIERRY DEHOVE PHOTOGRAPHY; ATOMIC IMAGERY/GETTY IMAGES; PATRICK O'BRIEN; STEVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES; ROB WHITE/GETTY IMAGES; CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES; NILS NOREN; HAMILTON PRINCESS & BEACH CLUB

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BLUE HEAVEN Durbar Hall, in the Suján Rajmahal Palace. ***Below:*** The entrance gate.

In Living COLOR

VIBRANTLY ADDICTIVE *JAIPUR GETS ITS MODERN* LUXURY GROOVE *ON.*

By Sarah Khan

Now the capital of the state of Rajasthan, **Jaipur** was for centuries the seat of various royal and noble families. With time, many of their *havelis* (mansions) were turned into hotels. While splendid to look at and undoubtedly luxurious, these over-the-top palaces can suffer from a formality that, along with cloying service, can become oppressive. As the Pink City increasingly becomes a destination for the world's style elite—people in love with India's opulence but allergic to antiquated fussiness—satisfying alternatives can be hard to find.

The most splendid option, the **Suján Rajmahal Palace**, is situated just outside the city's tourist-clogged historic center. The stately former palace, built in 1729, allows guests to live like maharajas (right down to a private dinner at the City Palace) but in the more relaxed elegance of top European hotels. Thanks to a playfully irreverent renovation, completed in February, the hotel now pops with local colors—fuchsia, teal, cobalt—and contemporary spirit. "I wanted to create spaces that didn't look like sets from *Octopussy*, which is what foreigners expect. I didn't want a pastiche," says designer Adil Ahmad of the hotel's 14 suites, which have hosted a queen of England—and Camelot. We think Jackie Kennedy would approve of the new look. FROM $767, SUJANLUXURY.COM

For a more intimate, boutique experience, the 12-room **47 Jobner Bagh** is an oasis in the center of the city. It was once part of the maharaja of Jobner's gardens, and a 2014 renovation has produced a tranquil marriage of Jaipur aesthetics and Tuscan hospitality. Even if you don't stay here, eat at the rooftop restaurant. It offers one of the best views of the legendary Tiger Fort—a must at sunset. Just be sure to book in advance. FROM $129, JOBNERBAGH.COM «



SHOP

Traditional chic, with a dash of Italy.

If you go to Jaipur, chances are you're planning to shop. The city has a long history of enticing textile and gem lovers, and savvy boutique owners are luring a new wave of shopaholics by rebooting centuries-old traditions.

At the minimalist **Teatro Dhora** you'll find ethnic *kurtas* (tunics), Kolhapuri sandals, and handcrafted handbags alongside furniture from the owners of the label Dhora. Italy meets India at **Jaipur Modern** (*above*), where Yash Agarwal and Maximiliano Modesti showcase local craftsmen. (Take a break from Indian cuisine at their café, the Kitchen at Jaipur Modern, which offers caprese salads and pastas in a high-design dining room.)

Some of the buzziest shops are at the Narain Niwas Palace Hotel, just south of the old city. Hidden within the jasmine- and lotus-scented gardens you'll find the decade-old **Hot Pink**, host to top designers from Mumbai and New Delhi (Manish Arora, Abraham & Thakore, Neeru Kumar), and **Idli**, where French expat Thierry Journo adds fun prints to ethnicwear and dresses. «



DRINK

A bar for 2015 maharajas.

Dutch designer Marie-Anne Oudejans's **Bar Palladio** at the Narain Niwas Palace is a collection of jewel box rooms, with tented ceilings and fanciful murals. It has one of the most extensive cocktail menus in Jaipur, as well as the locally made liqueur Royal Chandrahas, a staple of royalty that has only recently become available to commoners. Come January, the Palladio should be the watering hole of choice for the Jaipur Literary Festival. «

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JAIPUR MODERN; HENRY WILSON; SUJANLUXURY.COM (2)



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The Great American LONG WEEKEND

LIKE A CAT *WITH* NINE LIVES, *MIAMI IS HAVING ANOTHER* MOMENT—*AND* THIS TIME *IT'S NOT JUST* ABOUT THE BEACH.

By Laurie Brookins







SEA CHANGE
Clockwise from left: **Art Basel Miami Beach, 2014; the Edition's BungalowTower; Nautilus lip balm; Morris Lapidus's Fontainebleau.**

The late Morris Lapidus famously titled his 1996 autobiography *Too Much Is Never Enough*, an apt sentiment from an architect who championed the Midcentury Modern aesthetic, opting for drama and whimsy over less-is-more austerity. You have only to glimpse the details at the landmark Miami Beach resorts he conceptualized—the Swiss cheese wall at the Fontainebleau, or the Eden Roc's flamboyant lobby—to understand that this was a man who viewed hotels as theater. (He counted Broadway legend Busby Berkeley as an art influence.)

"Too much is never enough" could also apply to tourism in **Miami**. Consider that more than 2,500 hotel rooms will join the existing 50,000 in 2015, and by all accounts they're much needed, as occupancy rates are at an all-time high. And for perhaps the first time in 25 years, the conversation isn't rooted in glamorous South Beach. Bal Harbour, downtown Miami, and the nearby Design District are all exploding. With the city's high season about to get rolling—driven by the flurry of fabulous parties scheduled during Art Basel Miami Beach (this year it runs December 3–6)—now is the time to plan that long weekend. And with four hot districts to choose from, you can explore one per day.

MIAMI BEACH

Those who frequent London or Paris might find the area's Art Deco buildings kitschy, but there's no mistaking the style found in South Beach and adjacent Mid-Beach, with their abundance of chic hotels a quick Uber ride from loads of hot restaurants and nightclubs.

Prefer your amenities under one roof? Ian Schrager—who propelled South Beach's hotel boom with his 1992 Delano renovation—opened the **Edition** last year, enticing Jean-Georges Vongerichten to oversee the hotel's four restaurants, which include the Latin-inspired **Matador Room**. The huge **Basement** nightclub houses a bowling alley and theater. FROM $259, EDITIONHOTELS.COM

A few blocks north, hotelier Alan Faena is developing a project similar to his celebrated Faena District in Buenos Aires, with a hotel, shops, restaurants, and an eponymous arts center along six blocks of

MIAMI VICES

A trio of the city's A-listers share favorite spots.



"My parents used to take me to Joe's Stone Crab on Washington Avenue in Miami Beach in the 1950s, and I still go. It's authentic, down-to-earth, and real."
—Ian Schrager, hotelier



"Il Gabbiano, at the mouth of the Miami River. The food is wonderful, but the view and the fresh breezes make it special. The idea that you're in a big city melts away."
—Adrienne Arsht, philanthropist



"There are good finds at the Sunday antiques market on Lincoln Road. And the PAMM building is a work of art. When it rains in the hanging gardens outside, the effect is almost prehistoric."
—Michael Schwartz, chef

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SEAN DRAKES/GETTY IMAGES; NIKOLAS KOENIG; DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D. STYLED BY ANITA SALERNO FOR R.J. BENNETT REPRESENTS; FONTAINEBLEAU MIAMI BEACH; ANDREW H. WALKER/GETTY IMAGES; ANDREW TOTH/GETTY IMAGES; DAVID M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES. MAP BY HAISAM HUSSEIN

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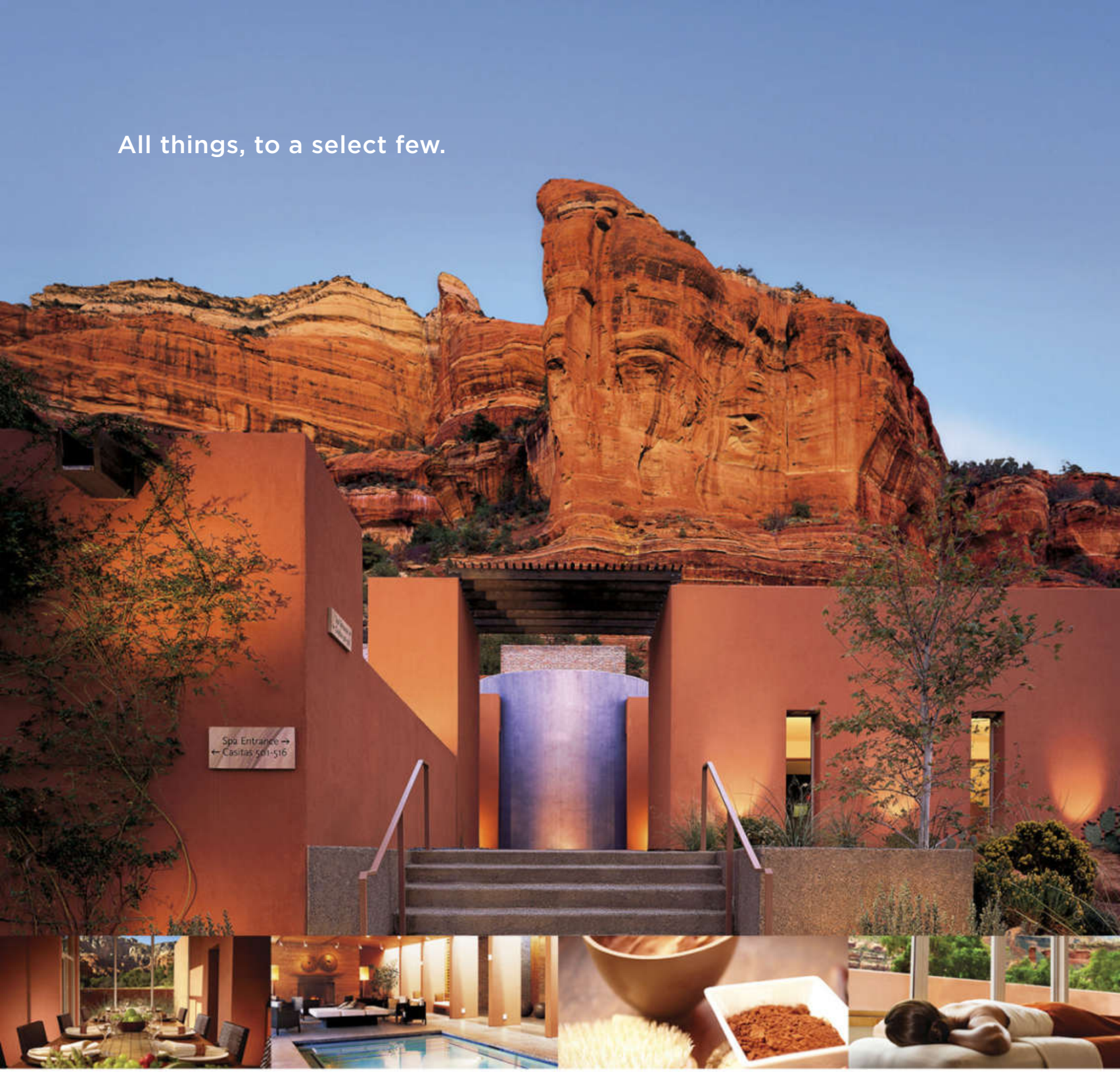
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Miami Beach waterfront. It debuts on November 1 with the **Faena Hotel Miami Beach**, a 169-room property with a fanciful pedigree, including interiors by filmmaker Baz Luhrmann and costume designer Catherine Martin (FROM $745, FAENA.COM). Shortly after that the **Faena Forum**, a 50,000-square-foot arts center designed by Rem Koolhaas, opens.

In 2016 look for the 210-room **Nobu Hotel at Eden Roc**, a "hotel within a hotel" designed by David Rockwell (FROM $450; EDENROCMIAMI.COM). Meanwhile, Lapidus is having yet another moment: In October, Sixty Hotels reopens the refurbished **Nautilus** (FROM $212, SIXTYHOTELS.COM), with his iconic stairway to nowhere.



CENTER PIECES ***From left:*** **The Design District's Palm Court; City View Garage has façades by John Baldessari, Leong Leong, and (*right*) IwamotoScott.**

DESIGN DISTRICT

This area in midtown, once a trade-centric enclave of galleries, artist studios, and interior design showrooms, has for a while been a burgeoning retail and restaurant hot spot. The industrial vibe has been supplanted by a more refined, open-air environment that invites comparisons to Rodeo Drive—though the graffiti art that once dominated the district is still in evidence. Book a tour with **Wynwood Art Walk** (305-814-9290) to get the true flavor of the neighborhood's beginnings. **Tom Ford** and **Hermès** shops will soon join **Lanvin**, **Emilio Pucci**, and **Cartier.**

Chef Michael Schwartz was an area pioneer, opening the farm-to-table **Michael's Genuine Food & Drink** in 2007, and then **Harry's Pizzeria** and the more elegant **Cypress Room**. Other popular spots are the **Embassy**, for tapas by Alan Hughes, and **Mandolin Aegean Bistro**, which features mezes like grilled octopus.



GOLD STANDARD The lobby of the St. Regis in Bal Harbour; bathrooms feature Remède products.



BAL HARBOUR

More low-key than its southern neighbors, and more posh, Bal Harbour is Miami's Upper East Side to South Beach's Soho. Passionate shoppers should make this their base. Secluded outposts of the **Ritz-Carlton**, with a new **Exhale Spa** (FROM $550, 305-455-5400), and the **St. Regis** (FROM $639, 305-993-3300) are here; the latter is just across the road from one of the top retail destinations in the world, **Bal Harbour Shops**, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. This is where you'll find the only freestanding **Chanel**, **Balenciaga**, **Alexander McQueen**, and **Graff** boutiques in Miami. (Legendary trunkmaker **Goyard** arrives in December.)

Dining options include the immensely popular **Carpaccio**, which will be joined before the end of the year by a Stephen Starr bistro.

COMING SOON As of 2016, Downtown will be home to the Frost Museum of Science.



DOWNTOWN/ BRICKELL DISTRICT

Biscayne Boulevard and Brickell Avenue used to be dominated by towering office buildings, but a culture scene is blossoming thanks to the **Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts**, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, and the two-year-old **Pérez Art Museum Miami**. With its mix of high-profile visiting artists and permanent works by Diego Rivera, Purvis Young, and Frank Stella, PAMM is rightfully gaining a place on the global stage. Helping considerably is the Biscayne Bay location: Make time for cocktails at **Verde**, the museum's Stephen Starr restaurant, which has beautiful water views. The **Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science**, complete with planetarium and shark tank, arrives at Museum Park in 2016.

The **Four Seasons** and the **Viceroy** are already here, but you won't find a more highly anticipated project than **Brickell City Centre**, a $1 billion mixed-use development that will debut with the opening of a 263-room hotel, **EAST, Miami** (FROM $479, EAST-MIAMI.COM), in late 2015. «



WORKS OF ART **Firelei Báez's *Fire wood pretending to be fire (February 12, 2013)*, at PAMM (*below*).**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: PATRICIA AND PHILLIP FROST MUSEUM OF SCIENCE; IAN DAGNALL/ALAMY; COURTESY FIRELEI BAEZ; ROBIN HILL (2); DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D, STYLED BY ANITA SALERNO FOR R.J. BENNETT REPRESENTS (REMEDE PRODUCTS; MATCHES); JASON DEWEY; MIAMI BEACH EDITION

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A MOST EXCELLENT GUIDE



ROME

THE ETERNAL





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FOREVER ROME

A TRAVEL GUIDE TO THE MODERN CLASSICS OF THE ETERNAL CITY.

Rome's "classical" periods can sometimes seem too many to count. There's the official ancient one, of course, but then there are the glories of Renaissance and Baroque Rome, and the golden era, when 20th-century cinema discovered the city: Anita Ekberg enticing Marcello Mastroianni into the Trevi Fountain, and Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck scooting through town on a Vespa.

Today the ideal insider's romp through the city involves a healthy helping of each of these eras, as well as the one we seem to be in right now, with charismatic young prime minister Matteo Renzi in residence and a modernity-minded Pope Francis at the Vatican. Here we've assembled our own sophisticated senate's worth of in-the-know Romans and Rome devotees to create this highly curated course in the classics—both old and new—of the Eternal City.





OUR GUIDES



HEINZ BECK: German-born chef at Rome's only three-Michelin-starred restaurant, La Pergola.



BIANCA ARRIVABENE VALENTI GONZAGA: Deputy chair of Christie's Italy and a member of the country's royal Savoia family.



FABIO BORGHESE: Rome-based executive and a prince of the famed art-collecting, villa-building family.



JACARANDA CARACCIOLO: Roman aristo, former journalist, and daughter of Carlo Caracciolo, prince of Castagneto and duke of Melito.



MARELLA CARACCIOLO CHIA: Journalist, writer, and niece of Gianni and Marella Agnelli, with whom she recently co-authored *The Last Swan.*



GELASIO GAETANI D'ARAGONA LOVATELLI: Wine producer and consultant.



MARTINA MONDADORI SARTOGO: Editor in chief of *Cabana* magazine and *T&C* European editor at large.

HOTELS

The crowd that once peacocked its way up and down the Via Veneto has now in large part moved to the lounges and *terrazze* of the city's top hotels. Stay, or just stop by, and enjoy the show.

Hotel de Russie: With its own courtyard, this grande dame is a favorite for those who enjoy a see-and-be-seen perch in the center of it all. The historic 122-room Piazza del Popolo hotel, says Jacaranda Caracciolo, "hosts a fun cocktail hour and great Sunday brunch" from star chef Fulvio Pierangelini. Some of the superior deluxe rooms have private balconies overlooking the Santa Maria in Montesanto church; some of the superior junior suites have windows over the garden. As wine consultant Gelasio Gaetani D'Aragona Lovatelli, who likes to use the hotel spa and gym, says, "Roma without de Russie, it would be different." ROCCOFORTEHOTELS.COM

Hotel d'Inghilterra: If the de Russie is all about alfresco, the 88-room Inghilterra looks inward, to clubby paneled *salone* and pastel-hued rooms. "It's in the middle of it all," says Christie's Bianca Arrivabene Valenti Gonzaga, "but very cozy and warm, like being in a private home." Fabio Borghese concurs, praising also its British-looking Bond Bar. NIQUESAHOTELS.COM

D.O.M.: Like Paris's Hôtel Costes, the boudoir-noir style of this new arrival—in a converted 17th-century palazzo a block from the Tiber—pulls in a "trendy young crowd that wants to enjoy a fun weekend," says hotelier Carla Sersale. DOMHOTELROMA.COM

J.K. Place Roma: This J.K.—with 30 rooms, the boutique brand's largest—opened in a palazzo just off Via dei Condotti two years ago and feels more like a residence than a hotel. (The decor is inspired by ancient Rome and Tom Ford's *A Single Man.*) Scarf designer Dianora Salviati loves it for drinks at the bar or in the skylit, living room–like lobby. JKROMA.COM

Aldrovandi Villa Borghese: The recently renovated 19th-century convent near the Borghese Gardens is family-run. "The Old World charm is still intact, however," says *T&C* editor in chief Jay Fielden, "and the generous pool beneath a garden of towering pines is all you and your kids will need on a hot day—besides an Aperol Spritz." ALDROVANDI.COM







A PRIMA VISTA *From far left:* ***Roman Holiday,*** **1953; Colosseum views from Palazzo Manfredi; Romeo's Spaghetti Pastificio dei Campi; a suite at J.K. Place Roma.** ***Below:*** **Pasta in a 1966 issue of *T&C*.**



LORCAN O'NEILL: Contemporary art dealer whose gallery is one of the city's top spaces.



JOHN R. PHILLIPS: U.S. Ambassador to the Italian Republic and the Republic of San Marino.



ACHILLE SALVAGNI: Rome-born, -bred, and -based architect and designer.



DIANORA SALVIATI: The scarf designer now divides her time between Tuscany and New York, but she's Rome-born and a regular in her native city.



CARLA SERSALE: Hotelier, consummate host, and part-time Rome resident who with husband Antonio co-owns and operates Positano's Le Sirenuse.



ADELE CHATFIELD-TAYLOR: American historic preservationist who spent 25 years guiding the American Academy in Rome as president and chief executive.



SOLEDAD TWOMBLY: Argentina-born, Rome-based fashion designer; daughter-in-law of Cy Twombly.

RESTAURANTS

Romans sit down to dinner between 9 and 9:30 p.m.; they order without looking at the menu; they like their seafood raw, their meat well-done, and ice in their white wine; and they never, ever drink cappuccino after breakfast. (For the most part, in fact, cappuccino *is* breakfast.)

Dal Bolognese: Perched on the edge of Piazza del Popolo, the restaurant, according to Caracciolo, who loves the gin-and-tonics and upstairs smoking room, "is like a private club." Says Borghese, "It's evergreen but also the hottest place in town. Maître d' Antonello, he's the boss—knows where everyone should be seated." 011-39-06-361-1473

Pierluigi: "Our family favorite, for as long as I can remember," says Marella Caracciolo Chia. "The owner, Roberto, has taken away some of the old-style Roman trattoria appeal, but it's still a great—if expensive—place, with wonderful waiters." The largely seafood-focused Pierluigi, she notes, is best experienced by "dining outside in the evening, where tables are spread out in a magnificent piazza to which cars have no access." PIERLUIGI.IT

La Campana: Former American Academy in Rome chief Adele Chatfield-Taylor likes this family-friendly restaurant, which claims to be Rome's oldest, open since 1518. "It's among the best food in the city, an out-of-the-way, typically Roman place. You know, traditionally, you're supposed to have gnocchi on Thursdays in Rome, and this would be the kind of place to do that." Nearby is Due Ladroni, with equally great food and a charming wait staff. RISTORANTELACAMPANA.COM

Armando al Pantheon: "This is a truly family-run restaurant, and you see the owners working in the kitchen," says chef Heinz Beck of this recently renovated classic near the Pantheon. "Their cuisine is some of the best traditional Roman cooking in town—amatriciana, carbonara. It's all very comfortable; it feels like a family *festa*." ARMANDOALPANTHEON.IT/EN

Romeo Chef & Baker: Headed by chef Cristina Bowerman, whose other restaurant here, Glass, has a Michelin star, this salumeria, bakery, wine bar, and bistro opened just northeast of the Vatican. Oenophile Gaetani likes the Tenuta di Fiorano red made by Prince Alessandrojacopo Boncompagni Ludovisi just outside the city, which he calls "the Sassicaia of Roma." ROMEO.ROMA.IT

Pastificio San Lorenzo: Part of Fondazione Cerere, which offers studio space to artists, this restaurant and bar in the foundation's headquarters—a former pasta factory near the main train station—has become a go-to for creative types of independent means. "The area was completely undeveloped," says Salviati. "Then the artists moved in, and now there's this great place." Go for an aperitivo but stay to eat, enjoying not just the scene (Gaetani calls it "very New York") but the subtle updates of traditional dishes. PASTIFICIOSANLORENZO.COM



ON THE COVER ***Clockwise from top left:*** **Piazza Navona, shot by Slim Aarons, 1971; Sophia Loren, 1964; Temple of Aesculapius, at Villa Borghese gardens; Rome resident Cy Twombly poses for Robert Rauschenberg, 1952.** ***Center:*** **Princess Maria Milagros del Drago Colonna sits in her family's palazzo for *T&C*'s September 1976 issue.**





SIGHTS

It's tough turning a corner in Rome without hitting a ruin, a Renaissance masterpiece, or, increasingly, a great contemporary work. An expert guide is a necessity. We love the pedigreed pros of Context Travel (CONTEXTTRAVEL.COM), as well as Yale-educated American Katie Parla (KATIEPARLA.COM), who's called Rome home for nearly 15 years.

Villa Borghese: "Gardens are one of the best, and most neglected, features in Rome," notes Chia, but this one is hard to ignore. "Walking among the Mediterranean pines always puts me in a good mood, and then going into Galleria Borghese is a dream," says Arrivabene of the park's famed museum, which has one of the world's top holdings of Baroque art. GALLERIABORGHESE.IT

The Colosseum and Forum: "No visit to Rome is complete without a visit to the Colosseum," says ambassador John Phillips. Soledad Twombly points to the nearby ruins of Trajan's Market, where "great exhibits of contemporary art often engage wonderfully with the antique ruins in the heart of Rome," while Chatfield-Taylor marvels at Trajan's Column, whose spiraling carvings tell the story of the emperor's battles against the barbarian Dacians.

Santa Maria in Trastevere: "One of the great places to see," says Chatfield-Taylor of this mosaic-bedecked church. "All of those great columns are recycled from other sites. It has characteristics of each of the different periods. It's open a great deal; you never know when, exactly, but that's Rome," she says. "You roll with it."

Doria Pamphilj Gallery: This museum, near Piazza Venezia, "is an enchanting palace still lived in by the princely family whose art collection is one of the world's greatest in private hands," says gallerist Lorcan O'Neill, who recommends a visit to see works by Caravaggio, Velázquez, Bernini, Annibale Carracci, and Lotto. The audio guide is narrated by the family's current prince, Jonathan Doria Pamphilj, and it includes stories of the clan's 17th-century matriarch Donna Olimpia Pamphilj. DORIAPAMPHILJ.IT



PALAZZO PARADISE
Clockwise from top: **The Temple of Aesculapius; Princess Benedetta Boncompagni Ludovisi, in *T&C*'s September 1976 issue; the Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere.**

American Academy in Rome: Although this ivory tower atop Gianicolo Hill is open chiefly to its scholars, Chatfield-Taylor says that "it is possible to arrange a tour with some advance notice"—or by making a donation and becoming a Friend of the Academy. Phillips calls the institution's 1914 McKim, Mead, and White building one of his favorite places in Rome and considers its gardens "the most beautiful grounds you could imagine." AAROME.ORG

MAXXI: O'Neill suggests venturing out from the main, Zaha Hadid–designed MAXXI museum on a modern architecture tour that can include the Renzo Piano–designed Auditorium concert hall nearby, as well as a small stadium with an ingenious concrete dome that was designed for the 1960 Olympics. FONDAZIONEMAXXI.IT

Domus Aurea—Nero's Golden House: Sitting near the Colosseum—which was, in fact, built atop what was once a man-made lake—the ruins of this opulent, 1st-century villa recently reopened for mid-restoration tours on weekends. Nero built it as his home following the famed fire through which he fiddled. COOPCULTURE.IT

DE AGOSTINI/W. BUSS/GETTY IMAGES (VILLA BORGHESE); T&C ARCHIVES; PHOTO BY DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D (MAGAZINE); AGE FOTOSTOCK/ALAMY (CHURCH)

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ROMA

SERPENTI

SHOPPING

There are, of course, the big-brand boutiques lining Via dei Condotti, but here are the kind of shops insiders share with friends and family.

Battistoni: For Achille Salvagni, this 69-year-old institution, hidden in a courtyard off Via dei Condotti, is the source for hand-tailored shirts: "Its clients feel almost like the members of a club, an exclusive gathering." BATTISTONI.COM

Saddlers Union: "Leather bags and suitcases, made in the best Italian craft tradition," says Chia. Established in the 1950s, the small label recently relaunched under a "dazzling young owner," she says. SADDLERSUNION.COM

Gammarelli: Tailors to the pope since the 18th century, the shop has the signature red and purple socks. O'Neill reports, however, that some of the artists he represents wear its banded-collar short-sleeve shirts. "I hear the underwear is also top-notch." 011-39-06-6880-1314

Galleria O: This design gallery and shop specializes in iconic 20th-century pieces by the likes of Giò Ponti and Max Ingrand. Salviati calls its selection "the best in Rome." GALLERIAO.NET

Concept Animalier & Oltre: The best place for brightly patterned, tightly tailored men's swimwear by new label Peninsula (PENINSULASWIMWEAR.COM). "They're using natural fabrics and buttons made of seashells," Chia says. "Lapo Elkann is already a fan." ANIMALIEREOLTRE.COM

Lavori Artigianali Femminili: Exquisite children's clothes "for the most elegant babies in the world," says Martina Mondadori Sartogo. "You go there, whisper the newborn's name, and they will know what will complete his or her wardrobe." LAFLAVORIARTIGIANALIFEMMINILI.IT



SADDLERS UNION
BUCKET BAGS ($716), SADDLERSUNION.COM





ETERNAL APPEAL
J. Paul Getty Jr. and fiancée Talitha Pol, in Rome, 1966. *Far left:* Chiaia di Luna Beach, in Ponza. *Right:* La Posta Vecchia's pool.







A pure prototype of what we call a House Collector is Paul Getty, Jr. He and Talitha, his beautiful wife, are avid travelers, never far from home base—one in Rome, one in Marrakesh, one in London.

MR. & MRS. PAUL GETTY, JR.'S PENTHOUSE IN ROME





KASIA WANDACZ/GETTY IMAGES; (OUTDOOR PAUL GETTY COURTESY HEADING: (ALL) THE WORLD (INDOOR PAUL GETTY

FRESCO PERSPECTIVE ***Above:*** **Hotel Il Pellicano, in Porto Ercole.** ***Left:*** **J. Paul Getty Jr.'s Roman home, from the *T&C* archives, April 1970.**

BEYOND ROME

In a country as small as Italy, a long weekend in Tuscany is never terribly far away. Our experts narrowed their search to trips that can be an overnight or even a day trip from Rome.

Gardens of Ninfa: "The English-style romantic garden emphasizes the mysterious character of the site," says Salvagni of these gardens about an hour's drive from Rome. "With ruins, a lake and river, magnolias, and ornamental cherry blossoms, a walk in the Gardens of Ninfa is a dream in a fairy tale." FONDAZIONECAETANI.ORG/GIARDINI.PHP

La Posta Vecchia: J. Paul Getty's former home on the Tyrrhenian Sea now houses a hotel and a Michelin-starred restaurant Salviati likes. The Sciò family owns it, and also has the Tuscan Coast's Il Pellicano, which remains a favorite hideaway for Romans. La Posta is about an hour away, Il Pellicano just over two. LAPOSTAVECCHIA.COM/EN

Capalbio: Just over an hour from Rome's Fiumicino Airport, Capalbio is set at the border between the Lazio and Tuscany regions and is "Italy's Hamptons," according to Mondadori. "It's mainly a destination with private properties to rent rather than hotels," she says, "but there are great restaurants, like Il Frantoio in the old town and Il Tortello in Pescia Fiorentina." Her favorite beaches include La Dogana and L'Ultima Spiaggia.

Fattoria di Fiorano: Down the Appian Way, itself lined with millennia-old monuments, Alessia Antinori—the 26th generation of her winemaking family—has started an organic café, L'Orto di Alberico, a winery, and a farm on a swath of ancestral land. Chia calls it "one of Rome's best-kept secrets." FATTORIADIFIORANO.IT/EN

Ponza: "It may seem strange that such crystal-clear waters can exist so near Rome," says Salvagni of this little island south of the city, reachable by a 90-minute ferry ride from Anzio. He recommends dinner at Orèstorante (ORESTORANTE.IT) or something more informal at Gennarino a Mare (GENNARINOAMARE.COM), which also has an inn. Salvagni suggests a stay at Villa Laetitia (VILLALAETITIA.COM), a boutique hotel owned by Anna Fendi.

Castel Gandolfo: Since the middle of last year Pope Francis has welcomed visitors to the sprawling gardens that surround the papal summer palace, on a hilltop about a 40-minute drive from town and overlooking cerulean Lake Albano. MUSEIVATICANI.VA

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ALI MACGRAW

There's no telling what's under her coat and hat—or in that enormous duffel—but MacGraw outwardly displays all the markings of the well-dressed traveler: tailored layers and a focal accessory. Hers is the giant patterned scarf or Steve McQueen, depending on how you look at things.

DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D. STYLED BY JUDITH TREZZA FOR R.J. BENNETT REPRESENTS (BRACELETS); STAFF/AFP/GETTY IMAGES (MACGRAW AND MCQUEEN)



INES DE LA FRESSANGE

Yes, she has the unattainable French thing in her favor, but the simple silhouette and neutral palette of her airport uniform can be replicated. Note: flats, not flip-flops.

AKRIS PULLOVER ($1,690) AND PANTS ($795), AKRIS.CH; **BRUNELLO CUCINELLI** VEST ($4,570), 212-334-1010; **MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION** BAG ($890), 866-709-KORS

LAGOS CERAMIC AND DIAMOND BRACELET ($6,000), LAGOS.COM

HEMMERLE AMBER AND DIAMOND EARRINGS (PRICE ON REQUEST), HEMMERLE.COM



EMPORIO ARMANI SANDALS ($700), ARMANI.COM

CELINE CLUTCH ($500), 212-535-3703

VICTORIA BECKHAM

Google images of "chic women at airports," and you'll see they all have one thing in common: sunglasses. Also, often, well-tailored pants and a crisp button-down. Plus, a great coat or blazer to hide any in-flight infractions.

Flight PLANS

THE BEST ROUTE *IS ALWAYS THE MOST DIRECT ONE. BUT* THE IDEAL ENSEMBLE *REQUIRES SOME CONNECTIONS.*

We can all bemoan the state of dress in travel—sweatpants, Ugg boots, flip-flops—and wax nostalgic about the days when Jackie Kennedy wouldn't fly without getting her hair done. But the solution to the crisis is at hand. After careful analysis of the species of woman who looks great straight off the plane, *T&C* has ascertained that layering is the answer. (Swiss luxury label Akris agrees and is launching a Fashion Power Travel capsule collection this month.) Pictured here, our carefully orchestrated travel system.

PIERRE HARDY TOTE ($995), 646-449-0070

LANVIN SANDALS ($1,085), 646-439-0380

GRID-IT! ORGANIZER ($25), COCOON INNOVATIONS.COM

DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D. STYLED BY JUDITH TREZZA FOR R. J. BENNETT REPRESENTS (OUTFIT, BAGS, SANDALS); JACOPO RAULE/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES (DE LA FRESSANGE); WENN LTD./ALAMY (BECKHAM)

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PARIS
Two young Parisians dance across the rotating dial over the course of 24 hours.
VAN CLEEF & ARPELS LADY ARPELS UNE JOURNEE A PARIS WATCH ($77,000), 877-VAN-CLEEF.





KYOTO
A master artisan hand-painted this porcelain dial with scenes from a famous Kyoto horse race.
HERMES SLIM D'HERMES KOMA KURABE WATCH (PRICE ON REQUEST), HERMES.COM.



Time & LOCATION

A WATCH *WITH A POSTCARD-LIKE DIAL CAN REALLY* TAKE YOU PLACES.

By definition, a dual time zone watch lets you know the hour in two places at once. A recent crop, however, gives this function a poetic twist, with dials worthy of postcards home. One, a limited edition piece created for Patek Philippe's 175th anniversary, was inspired by old images of Lake Geneva; a marquetry artisan used 166 pieces of wood to realize the scene on the dial. It can't tell you the precise time in Geneva if you're in Manhattan, but it may let you feel, even for a moment, a cool breeze right off the lake. *Stephen Watson*



INDIA
An ancient copper engraving process was used to carve Ganesh into the dial.
BLANCPAIN VILLERET SHAKUDO WATCH ($160,600), 212-396-1735.



GENEVA
The wood marquetry dial shows a scene very much like a vintage postcard of Lake Geneva.
PATEK PHILIPPE CALATRAVA WATCH (PRICE ON REQUEST), AVAILABLE AT DE BOULLE, 713-627-7495.

HOME BRED

IN ARGENTINA, A MODERN-DAY BARN RAISING AT A STAR PLAYER'S *HORSE FARM.*

He's known as the David Beckham of polo, but when Nacho Figueras is not in the saddle at the Greenwich Polo Club or in the UAE for Prince Harry's Sentebale Cup, he's home in Argentina at his horse farm, Cria Yatay. "My horses are related to some of the most talented in the world," says the father of four. This year the Ralph Lauren model and St. Regis ambassador built a state-of-the-art barn inspired by Mies van der Rohe; to toast the new stables his St. Regis teammates came down for a match. Figueras will be donning the hotelier's team jersey more often in 2017, when the first St. Regis polo resort opens in Dubai. *Sarah Bray*



FAMILY BUSINESS
Figueras shows his son Artemio the ropes. *Right:* The St. Regis team and the new barn at Cria Yatay.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MICHEL SETBOUN/GETTY IMAGES (PARIS); ANDRES GUERRERO COLLADO/GETTY IMAGES (TEMPLE); S.G. WEHRLI/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE/CORBIS (SAILBOAT); TAJ HOTELS RESORTS AND PALACES (JAI MAHAL); COURTESY ST. REGIS (3)



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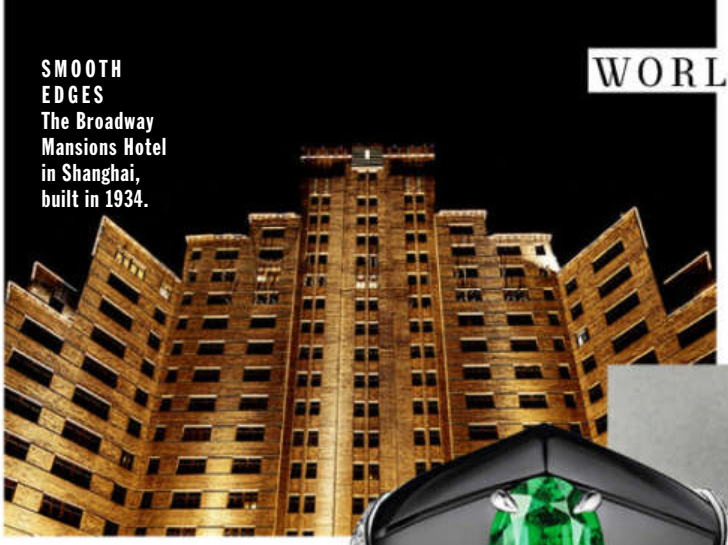
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SMOOTH EDGES The Broadway Mansions Hotel in Shanghai, built in 1934.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: **LOUIS VUITTON HAUTE JOAILLERIE** DIAMOND AND ONYX EARRINGS AND BRACELET, DIAMOND AND OPAL EARRINGS, TOURMALINE RING, AND EMERALD AND ONYX RING (PRICES ON REQUEST), LOUISVUITTON.COM





Speed ROUND

A DESIGN MOVEMENT CENTERED ON CURVES *INSPIRES A NEW COLLECTION OF JEWELRY.*

By Stellene Volandes



CIRCLE LINES The 20th Century Limited passenger train, designed in the Streamline Moderne style. ***Below left:*** San Juan's Normandie Hotel, built in 1939, was inspired by the ocean liner.





The World of Tomorrow, the theme of the 1939 World's Fair, filled the halls of the Expo buildings in Flushing, Queens, with fantasy structures full of rounded edges, curved walls, and aerodynamic shapes. The imaginations on display reflected a movement popular at the time called **Streamline Moderne**, a second phase of Art Deco that softened its hard-edge geometry and reveled in the sense of speed—and trains, planes, and automobiles—that excited the world toward the end of the Great Depression. Could the creators of the World of Tomorrow have envisioned a 21st-century room at the J.K. Place Hotel in Capri filled with jewels inspired by the same aesthetic? Louis Vuitton, also long associated with speed and travel, presented its sixth High Jewelry collection, titled Acte V/The Escape, this June on the Italian island. And though the designs highlight rare connoisseur's stones, including a Tadjikistan ruby, a sapphire from Myanmar's Pien Pyit mine, and lightning Ridge opals, the architecture of each piece has a strong Streamline Moderne influence, which appears in the curve of a diamond bar on a cuff bracelet or at the rounder edges of a black onyx ring set with an emerald. «

DAVID BARLOW/ALAMY (BROADWAY MANSIONS); BYGONE COLLECTION/ALAMY (TRAIN); GLYN GENIN/ALAMY (NORMANDIE)

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CARRY ON, PLEASE
The Rimowa plane was inspired by the Junkers F13 from the 1930s.

Sky PRIORITY

A LUGGAGE COMPANY TAKES THE NOTION OF OVERHEAD SPACE *TO A HIGHER LEVEL.*

By Whitney Robinson

Oshkosh, Wisconsin, may not be the first place one associates with German luggage manufacturer **Rimowa**, which is known for sleek, grooved suitcases made from materials like aircraft-grade aluminum and lightweight polycarbonate. But that's exactly where 100 journalists from as far afield as China, Brazil, and Ukraine convened in July, at the EAA AirVenture show, an annual gathering that attracts 500,000 aviation enthusiasts and 10,000 planes (temporarily making the local airport the busiest in the world). This year they witnessed the unveiling of Rimowa's newest "accessory": a plane. Not a model, mind you, but a full-blown flying replica of the revolutionary Junkers F13, which was the first all-metal passenger aircraft. It changed the course of aviation design in the 1930s, and had a corrugated body that inspired Rimowa CEO Dieter Morszeck's father to design the trademark luggage that made the company an internationally recognized name.



AIR APPARENT
Rimowa's new plane in simulated flight.

Building the working plane, with its distinctive open cockpit and room for four passengers, was a seven-year passion project for Morszeck, an avid pilot (he often flies his own jet). He started by looking for the original plans but ended up taking detailed measurements from an intact plane found in a Paris museum. The reborn F13, which is capable of flying 350 miles on a single tankful, is being constructed in Switzerland in a joint venture between Rimowa and Swiss airplane manufacturer JU-Air; it features a new Pratt & Whitney engine, aluminum cladding, and a roof lining and seats stitched from cognac Alcantara.

"I can proudly say that the aircraft we have built is even better than the original," Morszeck declared at the evening unveiling, which was attended by brand ambassadors Alessandra Ambrosio and Johannes Huebl, as well as singer Norah Jones. The company is accepting preorders for anticipated delivery in May 2016. But you can pack your suitcase now. FROM $2.2 MILLION, RIMOWA.COM

HAPPY *RETURNS*

A JEWELER'S VISIT TO A CLASSIC HOTEL *YIELDS TREASURES.*

In 2013 designer Temple St. Clair went back to La Mamounia, in Marrakech, after a 30-year hiatus and found a jewel in every corner of the recently restored hotel. The mosaics above the bar, the shadows cast by lanterns on a tiled floor, even the welcome gift of dates and almond milk inspired the collection she calls, fittingly, Nomad. *S.V.*



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COURTESY RIMOWA (PLANE, 2); COURTESY TEMPLE ST. CLAIR (TILES)

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OMOROVICZA

This September, the Budapest skincare brand Omorovicza will launch the revitalizing Blue Diamond Eye Cream. A further addition to the superlative Blue Diamond Collection, this new product smoothes fine lines and wrinkles, reduces dark circles and illuminates the eye contour for a fresher, more youthful appearance.

For more information, please visit **omorovicza.com**.



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By Klara Glowczewska

RECOMMENDED FOR: Wildlife and Africa enthusiasts with a genuine interest in conservation and the fate of the world's most critically endangered mega-mammals—as well as in the efforts to save them. (For more, see the October *T&C* cover story.) The cost—details are in "How to Book It"—includes a tax-deductible donation to the rescue effort.

WHY: In the past decade demand for rhino horn in China and Vietnam has made it the world's most valuable natural commodity, worth more per kilogram than diamonds or gold. Following the money, international criminal cartels have dug their talons deep into Africa, equipping gangs of poachers to infiltrate protected areas and slaughter rhinos—by some estimates more than four a day. South Africa, which has more than 88 percent of the surviving rhinos (both white and black), is a particular target. If the killing continues, they will face extinction by 2024. The **Botswana** government is working with private companies and neighboring countries to bring as many rhinos as possible to a safe haven in its less accessible, more easily defended areas. It is also providing military transport planes and Botswana Defense Force (BDF) soldiers to help resettle and protect the animals. One of its private sector partners, **Wilderness Safaris**, has been at the forefront of the funding and staffing for this latter-day Noah's Ark project for 16 years.

You'll begin your trip at Royal Malewane safari lodge, near South Africa's Kruger National Park, for an introduction to conservation issues; then it's on to Wilderness's **Mombo** camp in Botswana, where your experiences might range from a rhino capture to fitting the animals with tracking devices and monitoring their whereabouts and health. A moving and out-of-the-box adventure.

DAY 1

After landing in Johannesburg, you'll board a charter flight (1) to **Royal Malewane**, in Thornybush Game Reserve (2), a private conservancy adjacent to Kruger National Park. It's about as opulent as safari lodges get. Beat your jetlag with a massage or a swim at the spa, followed by an introductory game drive with superstar guides (Juan Pinto or Ryan Jack and their trackers, pending availability).

DAY 2

After an early continental breakfast, you will be off with your guides by 6:30 for a sunrise game drive (3); animals are most active and hence visible after dawn and at day's end. Expect to see rhinos, but also ➳





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ALEXEI HAY; DAVID NOTON PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY; ANN AND STEVE TOON/GETTY IMAGES; KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA; THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO. MAP: HAISAM HUSSEIN


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elephants, leopards, lions, hyenas, buffalo, and more, as you learn about their habitat and habits (4).

After lunch and an afternoon at leisure, it's time for another game drive and—one of the great pleasures of the bush—sundowners set up at the back of the Land Rover. Sip your scotch and soda (5) as darkness descends and Juan or Ryan points out the constellations in the Southern Hemisphere sky with the aid of his laser light. Seeing the Southern Cross is all the more dramatic knowing that here on earth the animals are out and about all around you, doing their wild things.

DAY 3

You've been accumulating facts about rhinos and other wildlife since your arrival. Today you can experience the wilderness in the most intimate way possible: by walking through it. You'll be led by highly skilled trackers—and accompanied by an armed backup in case of emergency (6). Chances are very good you'll find rhino tracks (7) and follow them, hearing along the way about how this extraordinary animal eats, mates, socializes, and fights. You'll discover, too, the complex art and science of reading the bush (which, alas, the poachers have mastered as well). Your eyes will learn to see anew and your mind to interpret, and you will be walking in the steps of our ancestors. The day will be structured for as much walking time as you like (a game drive is always an option if you prefer) and punctuated by a bush breakfast and lunch.

DAY 4

The most economical way to get to Mombo, close to the Botswana town of Maun, is via a commercial flight from Johannesburg, to which you'll fly this morning and spend the night at the Fairlawns Hotel. Relax in the afternoon and evening, or consider any number of activities in and around Johannesburg—including a visit to Soweto and the Apartheid Museum, gallery tours, and shopping (8). Your flight to Maun departs early the next morning. Note: A private charter from Royale Malewane straight to Mombo (with a customs stop in Maun) would eliminate the need to fly to Johannesburg and is available at additional cost.

DAY 5

A bush plane will take you from Maun airport to Mombo camp, on Chief's Island at the edge of the Okavango Delta, a natural wonder designated in 2014 as the 1,000th World Heritage Site. Check out the beginnings of the delta's waters from the plane windows during the 20-minute flight, as well as the immense and clearly visible Orapa diamond mine, run by DeBeers, the world's second-largest mine by value and volume. (It is largely Botswana's diamond wealth that enables its exemplary conservation stance.)

Part of the great pleasure of staying in Mombo (9, 10)—aside from its spectacular location—is its distinctly African, authentic bush camp aesthetic, luxurious yet environmentally harmonious (and 100 percent solar powered). You will check into your tented suite (with both indoor and outdoor showers…heaven!) by the early afternoon and at high tea receive a detailed briefing on the history and challenges of the rhino rescue efforts (as well as the plan for the next few days) from a member of Wilderness Safari's senior rhino management team: Keith Vincent, Map Ives, or Kai Collins.

The afternoon's game drive will end with your first visit to the bomas, corral-like enclosures where rescued rhinos that have arrived by BDF plane from South Africa (and sometimes elsewhere) get acclimated to their new surroundings before being released into the wild. You can climb up onto the high boma walls and observe up close the great gray refugees, which often include a cow and her calf. Black rhinos might let you stroke their surprisingly delicate pointed muzzles (11).

It's all an intimate and moving experience: You are in a small, semisecret site in the midst of spectacular African wilderness, talking to wildlife experts (12) passionate about their work and mission, listening to the rumblings of rhinos communicating among themselves in ways we still do not understand. A sundowner table will be set up for you near the bomas under the watchful eye of the BDF soldiers usually milling about here—a comforting feeling, given the extraordinary dollar value of the rhino horn inside the bomas, and in itself a remarkable fact. No other ➔

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ANDREW SCHOEMAN/NIS/GETTY IMAGES; THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO; EXPLORE; TIM HAWLEY/GETTY IMAGES; RICHARD BRADLEY/ALAMY; KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA; FRIEDRICH STARK/ALAMY; GREG BALFOUR EVANS/ALAMY; AFRIPICS.COM/ALAMY (2); MARK LEVY/ALAMY



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"Golden Temple of Amritsar" photo credit: Kenro Izu


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African government has made its military's first priority the safeguarding of its wildlife. It's a stark reminder that what's being waged here is nothing less than a war for the future of Africa's wilderness.

DAY 6

With several months' prior planning, project donors will be starting this day off with a bang: an adrenaline-charged rhino capture from a light helicopter accompanied by chase vehicles. This will involve immobilizing the rhinos, taking essential data measurements, and fitting the animals with electronic tracking devices.

After lunch, back at Mombo, a leisurely game drive to meet more of the local residents; Chief's Island abounds in lions, leopards, elephants, giraffes, zebras, buffalo, and innumerable other species. Relax into it. You will see, under the expert guidance of your tracker, little dramas unfolding all around you, the endless dance of mating and breeding, prey and predator, life and death.

If at all possible, you'll be able to witness near dusk the release of rhinos back into the wild, which can be determined only shortly before it happens **(13)**. These events take careful planning and are never made public for reasons of security. Wilderness Safaris and Explore (see "How to Book It," *below*) will do their best to organize and time your trip in such a way that you can participate in a release, but they cannot guarantee it.

DAY 7

You'll be back at the bomas early in the morning and set out with the security team and rhino monitors to track previously released rhinos, which can travel a dozen miles a day. This has all the drama of a hunt, but with a beneficent goal: to get sightings of the liberated animals and ascertain their health, social relationships, and territorial range. Their whereabouts will be determined through the tracking devices **(14)**, and then the chase will be on to get a "visual." Because it's purposeful, it will probably be the most exciting game drive you'll ever go on. Lunch is in the bush, and the timing of the return to camp is determined by the research goals of team rhino.

In the evening, another treat: a boma dinner at Mombo, preceded by tribal dancing performed by the staff around a fire. This is no listless tourist fare: Mombo employees determine the program, speak to guests about their customs, and enthusiastically share their Tswana and Bayei tribal culture and traditions.

DAY 8

A fluid last day. You might want a final visit to the rhino boma and/or an early morning game drive. You will have learned much during the week, and you will be seeing everything with new depth and perspective. This is a time for any final questions, or for simply letting the sights and sounds of this near-pristine wilderness wash over you.

Optional: Cap off your trip at 4 p.m. with a one-hour helicopter flight **(15)** over the Okavango Delta with Helicopter Horizons. It offers a breathtaking bird's-eye view of one of the richest and most unusual ecosystems on earth, and one that's now slowly but surely being repopulated with rhinos. You'll land at the Mombo airstrip—a great finale—just as the sun sets.

And that last sundowner back at the lodge, the final after-dinner conversation around the fire—a lovely African camp ritual—will be bittersweet for sure. You'll already be scheming about how to get back here, to these animals and to the men and women who care for them, and for Africa's future, so passionately. «

HOW TO *BOOK IT*

Exclusively through **Explore**, whose owner, travel specialist **Cherri Briggs**, has been working in African conservation for 20 years (CHERRI@EXPLOREAFRICA.NET).

Because of the logistical complexity of rhino transfer and care, this trip has limited availability. Donor departures will take place from July 15 to October 1, 2016, with exact dates to be determined a few months in advance, pending rhino translocation dates. You will need a measure of flexibility.

The cost is $18,655 per person, based on double occupancy (flights not included), and there is a tax-deductible donation requirement for participants of $50,000 per couple ($25,000 per person), which goes, via Wilderness Wildlife Trust, to Rhino Conservation Botswana. *K.G.*

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: DANA ALLEN; KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA; EXPLORE (2); SIRKO HARTMANN/GETTY IMAGES; KLARA GLOWCZEWSKA (3)



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SKINCARE

Eastern INFLUENCE

THE ASIAN BEAUTY BOOM *HAS WOMEN ALL OVER THE WORLD* LOOKING TO KOREA *FOR THE SECRETS—AND THE MANY, MANY STEPS—TO* FLAWLESS SKIN.

By Meg Storm

Maybe it began with BB creams, the rise of beauty blogs, or the shifting ways we shop online. But one thing is certain: **Asian beauty routines** are now a worldwide obsession. "Unlike in the U.S., the focus in Asia is not on anti-aging or damage repair," says Alicia Yoon, co-founder of South Korean (or K-beauty) e-retailer Peach and Lily. "It's about preserving healthy, beautiful skin." That means starting early. Asian women begin caring for their complexions in grade school, with regimens that could eventually include up to two dozen products a day. "It's not only the ingredients that are working hard," say Christine Chang and Sarah Lee of online beauty mecca Glow Recipe. "The women work hard as well." To sort through all the imports and new launches, we conferred with the experts noted here to break down the core curriculum of the Eastern approach to skin.



THE PREP PROCESS

Washing your face is now a two-step process known as the double cleanse. It involves removing makeup with an oil-based cleanser before washing away remaining debris with one that's water-based. Twice-weekly exfoliation with a gentle but effective konjac sponge removes dead skin cells, while the daily application of a hydrating essence ensures that subsequent products are absorbed thoroughly. ➳

SCENES FROM SEOUL *FROM LEFT:* **LANCOME** CLEANSING OIL ($42); **OLEHENRIKSEN** EMPOWER FOAMING MILK CLEANSER ($26); **CREMORLAB** MIRACLE TREATMENT ESSENCE ($42); **GUERLAIN** NIGHT REVITALIZING ESSENCE ($230); **BOSCIA** KONJAC SPONGE MINI TRIO ($16).



TPG/GETTY IMAGES (STREET STYLE); IZZET KERIBAR/GETTY IMAGES (CITY); DAVID LAWRENCE/STUDIO D (GUERLAIN)





FROM LEFT: **LANEIGE** WATER SLEEPING MASK ($23); **GIVENCHY** LACE FACE MASK ($330); **WHAMISA** HYDROGEL FACIAL MASK ($9); **SHANGPREE** GOLD BLACK PEARL EYE MASK ($60).

MASK MANIA

Sheet masks—typically made of natural fibers, gels, or, in the case of Givenchy's latest creation, couture lace—are applied immediately after cleansing, with the serum-soaked sheets offering instant tightening, brightening, and clarifying. Sleep masks, on the other hand, serve as the last step in a p.m. routine. Applied like a cream, they provide longer-term benefits like hydration and nourishment.



SEOUL SEARCHING Street style stars prove that glowing skin is the best accessory. ***Center:*** The city's beauty district, Myeong-dong.

THE TARGETED TREATMENTS

While the general rule of thumb is to apply eye cream, serum, oil, and moisturizer (in that order), Asian women will often layer many more products—we've heard it could be 24 or more!—to address specific skin concerns, from dullness and dark spots to fine lines and circles under the eyes. For extra credit, incorporate an eye essence, a pre-serum, or an ampoule, each of which contains concentrated ingredients and has a lighter texture than a serum.

FROM LEFT: **ELIZABETH ARDEN** SUPERSTART SKIN RENEWAL BOOSTER ($65); **SULWHASOO** HERBLINIC RESTORATIVE AMPOULES ($200); **CHANEL** LA SOLUTION 10 SKIN CREAM ($80); **SHISEIDO** INFUSING EYE CONCENTRATE ($65); **SKYN ICELAND** ARCTIC FACE OIL ($35); **DR. BRANDT** DNA DREAM NIGHT CREAM ($135). FOR DETAILS SEE PAGE 120.

GETTY IMAGES (STREET STYLE, SOLO); MAREMAGNUM/GETTY IMAGES (MYEONG-DONG); SOL-SOL (STREET STYLE, PAIR)

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SHISEIDO





NEW YORK

Since May, guests at the St. Regis Hotel in New York have been asking which flowers are being used in the lobby. The question is a compliment to Carlos Huber, the perfumer behind **Caroline's Four Hundred**, the green floral fragrance they're smelling. It's meant to evoke the rose- and hyacinth-scented galas thrown by Caroline Astor, the mother of St. Regis founder John Jacob Astor IV. $80 PER CANDLE, STREGISBOUTIQUE.COM



HAWAII

Lisa Hoffman has long been in love with the Pacific paradise. She has been going there since she was a child, and she honeymooned there with husband Dustin Hoffman in 1980. "I taught him my talent for letting go when it's time to let go," she says. That moment of truly arriving on vacation is captured in her latest scent, **Hawaiian Plumeria**, named for the flowers in the leis visitors receive when they step onto the islands. $22, LISAHOFFMANBEAUTY.COM

GLOBAL ENTRY

THE STORIES *BEHIND FOUR TRANSPORTING* SCENTS.

By Jamie Rosen



MARFA

There is camping, there is glamping, and then there is **El Cosmico**, a 21-acre collection of teepees, trailers, and tents in the Texas desert. David Moltz of Brooklyn perfumer D.S. & Durga was so taken with the site that he created a scent inspired by his visit—a camphorous, piney blend made with creosote shrubs, mesquite, and other local flora. It's available at El Cosmico's lustworthy shop. $150, ECPROVISIONCO.COM





MARRAKECH

Though Elad Yifrach grew up in Israel, his visit to Morocco in 2013 was a bit of a homecoming for the designer and founder of L'Objet. "My grandparents emigrated from Marrakech in the 1950s," he says. "The scent of the place was what their house smelled like: leather, spices, roses, mint tea service, sweets on the table." Which perfectly describes **Mamounia**, one of three destination-inspired candles in his new home fragrance line, Parfums de Voyage. $95, BERGDORFGOODMAN.COM

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: DUSTIN HOFFMAN (LISA HOFFMAN): TOLGA TEZCAN/GETTY IMAGES (FRAME); ELAD YIFRACH (COLUMNS): MALERAPASO/GETTY IMAGES (FRAME); NICK SIMONITE (TEEPEE): SUBJUG/GETTY IMAGES (FRAME); ST. REGIS (ASTOR): TOLGA TEZCAN/GETTY IMAGES (FRAME)

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THE ULTIMATE *CHECK-IN* CHECKLIST



Gili Lankanfushi,
Maldives

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They are all members of a highly exclusive club, **Wendy Perrin's Wow List**—which is harder to get into than Harvard. For more details on each, and to book with them, if you wish, go to WendyPerrin.com. Here, their specialties, in brief.

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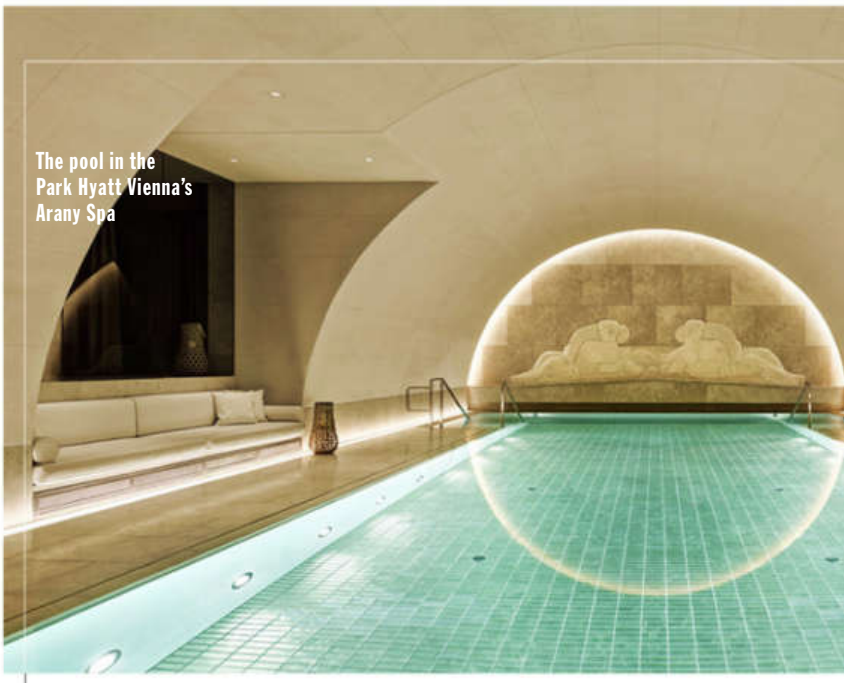
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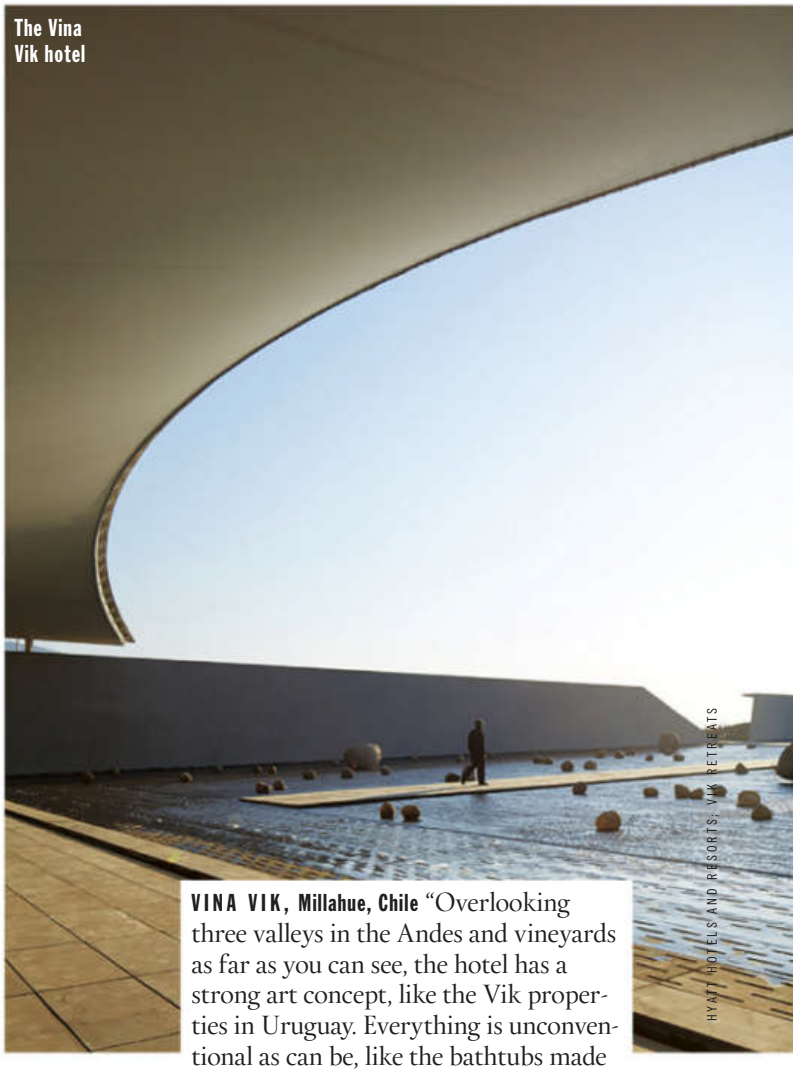
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The pool in the Park Hyatt Vienna's Arany Spa



The Vina Vik hotel

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NEW HOTELS



PARK HYATT VIENNA, Austria "It's got the perfect location (right in the Goldenes Quartier), huge rooms, and the best hotel pool in the city." FROM $580, VIENNA.PARK.HYATT.COM *Gwen Kozlowski, Exeter International*

AMILLA FUSHI, Maldives "An ultraluxurious resort seems to open every few months in the Maldives, and the latest and greatest is Amilla Fushi, which has huge villas and overwater bungalows, each with a pool. There's exceptional snorkeling and diving at the nearby reef, and in summer there's a large concentration of manta rays in nearby Hanifaru Bay." FROM $1,250, AMILLA.MV *Lindsey Wallace, Linara Travel*



The Treehouse at Amilla Fushi

TIM CLINCH (CHILTERN FIREHOUSE); ASHFORD CASTLE; WILDERNESS SAFARIS (HOANIB SKELETON COAST CAMP, LINKWASHA); VIRGIN LIMITED EDITION (MONT ROCHELLE); PETER VITALE (FOUR SEASONS MOSCOW); AMILLA FUSHI; BAA ATOLL, MALDIVES; LA RESERVE PARIS; NELSON GARRIDO (SUBLIME COMPORTA)



CHILTERN FIREHOUSE, London "I love it for its neo-Gothic architecture, the cozy rooms (with working fireplaces and hot water bottles in the beds), real keys with tassels, a perfect breakfast, and the buzzing restaurant. For me it's all about the details, and this place gets them right." FROM $839, CHILTERNFIREHOUSE.COM *M.B.*



LA RESERVE, Paris "The city is flooded with swanky new hotels, not to mention the reopening of grandes dames like the Crillon, but my favorite is the more intimate but no less fabulous and romantic La Réserve. It's big enough for a lovely restaurant, a little spa, even an indoor pool, and it's just around the corner from the boutiques on Rue du Faubourg St.-Honoré." FROM $833, LARESERVE-PARIS.COM *Terry McCabe, Altour*



ASHFORD CASTLE, County Mayo, Ireland "One of the most famous medieval castles turned hotels, with its fantastic art and antiques, just got a top-to-bottom renovation, with a new spa, cinema, and cigar terrace. The best hotel in Ireland." FROM $424, ASHFORDCASTLE.COM *Jonathan Epstein, Celebrated Experiences*



SUBLIME COMPORTA, Portugal "The cutting-edge design of the place is worth a trip, but there's the equally fantastic location: the up-and-coming Comporta area—close to the beach, the medieval town of Evora, and several wine estates." FROM $216, SUBLIMECOMPORTA.PT *Joel A. Zack, Heritage Tours Private Travel*



FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, Moscow "The Stalinist Hotel Moskva has reemerged as an ambitiously renovated Four Seasons, with the best location in town, steps from Red Square and the Bolshoi Theatre. Huge rooms, fun bar, stunning spa." FROM $580, FOURSEASONS.COM/MOSCOW *Greg Tepper, Exeter International*



HOANIB SKELETON COAST CAMP, Namibia "An unexpectedly elegant new safari camp in Namibia's rugged Kaokoveld region, where elephants and lions roam the vast plains. It's also the only property for hundreds of miles around." TENTS FROM $1,018, ALL-INCLUSIVE, WILDERNESS-SAFARIS.COM *Julian Harrison, Premier Tours*



MONT ROCHELLE, Franschhoek, South Africa "Richard Branson's chic makeover of a small hotel, in this famously gorgeous wine region, has 22 lovely rooms, most with stunning views of the vineyard and mountains beyond." FROM $355, VIRGINLIMITEDEDITION.COM *Cherri Briggs, Explore Inc.*



MWIBA LODGE, Serengeti, Tanzania "High up on a river gorge in the Serengeti Plains, with eight tented rooms that disappear into the landscape. Incredible architecture throughout, including a pool built on a cliff-top where the views stretch into infinity. Activities include off-road game drives day and night. December through April, you're in the perfect spot to see migrating wildebeest herds." FROM $2,500 (FOR TWO), LEGENDARYEXPEDITIONS.COM *Nina Wennersten and Dan Saperstein, Hippo Creek Safaris*



LINKWASHA CAMP, Zimbabwe "The first five-star tented camp in Hwange, the country's largest national park, has an unbeatable setting in an area that teems with wildlife year-round. In the

dry months (May through September) hundreds of elephants hang out at a watering hole next to the camp—mind-blowing!" FROM $1,444 (FOR TWO), WILDERNESS-SAFARIS.COM/CAMPS/LINKWASHA-CAMP *C.B.*



SUJAN RAJMAHAL PALACE, Jaipur, India "An out-of-this-world restoration by the queen mother of Jaipur, Padmini Devi, and her favorite designer, Adil Ahmad. From funky wallpaper designs to intricately patterned fabrics, each room is more dazzling than the next." FROM $981, SUJANLUXURY.COM *Bertie and Victoria Dyer, India Beat*



RITZ-CARLTON, Kyoto "The city was starved for luxury hotels before this opened, yet it's anything but a bland Western hotel. The design—an artful combination of traditional and modern Japanese elements—is as excellent as the location: right on the banks of the Kamogawa River, and a short walk from the main restaurant and entertainment area. A game changer for Kyoto." FROM $587, RITZCARLTON.COM *Duff Trimble, Wabi-Sabi Japan*



AMAN, Tokyo "Aman's first urban property looks and feels like a ryokan—with traditional Japanese artwork—but it's set in a modern, minimalist building in the heart of Tokyo. It has the best views of any hotel in the city, and the best swimming pool possibly anywhere in the world." FROM $600, AMAN.COM *D.T.*

ROMANTIC BEACH RESORTS



AMAN SVETI STEFAN, Montenegro "It isn't the beach that draws people here, it's the chance to stay in a 15th-century island fishing village, masterfully restored as only Aman can do it. I love the new spa complex, which has a private beach in front of it. *So* romantic." FROM $826, AMANRESORTS.COM *G.T.*



D-HOTEL MARIS, Turkey "A hotel this size, with nearly 200 rooms, may not be everyone's idea of romance, but it's in a secluded spot—with extraordinary sea views from everywhere—and spread out enough that you can always find a quiet corner. There are five private, idyllic beaches to choose from (two don't allow young kids), and I can't think of a water sport that isn't offered." FROM $379, DHOTEL.COM.TR *Earl Starkey, Sophisticated-Travel*



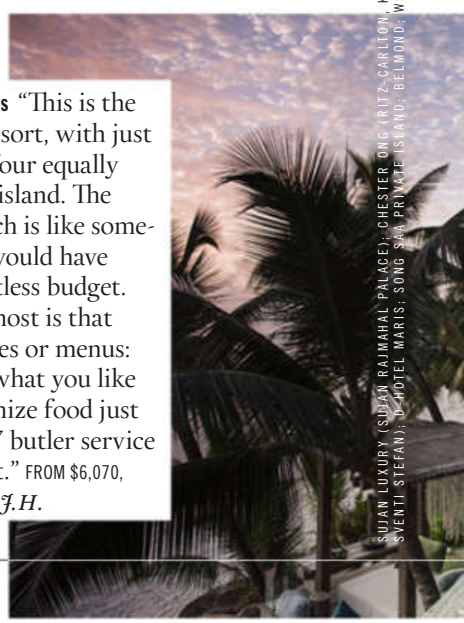
HOTEL ESENCIA, Mexico "The beach is spectacular, and the hotel is more secluded than almost any other on the Riviera Maya, even though it's just 25 minutes from Tulum. Now under new ownership and management, it's on track to be the very best and most intimate superluxury resort in the area." FROM $698, HOTELESENCIA.COM *Zachary Rabinor, Journey Mexico*



SONG SAA, Cambodia "The country's first luxury private island resort—located in the practically undiscovered blue waters of the Koh Rong Archipelago—is a marvelous place for a honeymoon, or to just drop out of the world." FROM $1,840, ALL-INCLUSIVE, SONGSAA.COM *Antonia Neubauer, Myths and Mountains*



The pool at Belmond Hotel Splendido



NORTH ISLAND, Seychelles "This is the ultimate private island resort, with just 11 accommodations and four equally beautiful beaches on the island. The villas are enormous—each is like something Robinson Crusoe would have built if he had had a limitless budget. One of the things I like most is that there are no set meal times or menus: You simply tell the chef what you like to eat, and he will customize food just for you. There's also 24/7 butler service from your villa attendant." FROM $6,070, ALL-INCLUSIVE, NORTH-ISLAND.COM *J.H.*

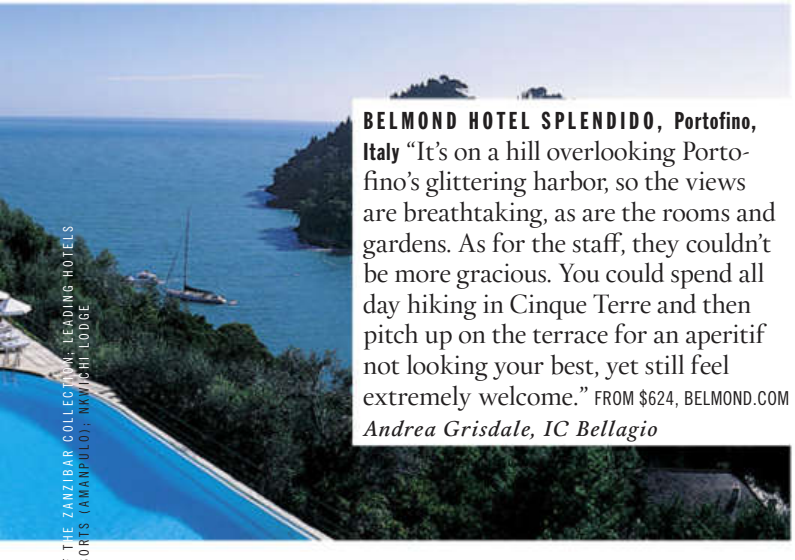
SUJAN LUXURY; SUJAN RAJMAHAL PALACE); CHESTER ONG (RITZ-CARLTON, KYOTO); AMAN RESORTS (AMAN TOKYO); AMAN SVETI STEFAN); D-HOTEL MARIS; SONG SAA PRIVATE ISLAND; BELMOND; WILDERNESS SAFARIS (NORTH ISLAND)



A picnic on Koh Rong Island



PARROT CAY, Turks and Caicos "A Zen-like place that sits not only on its own island but on one of the best beaches in the Caribbean—really, in the world. Plus, a great yoga program, an Asian-inspired spa, and delicious, healthy food. The villas and beach houses (with plunge pools and hammocks) are steps from the sea. The best part: Parrot Cay is a nonstop flight (plus a 45-minute boat ride) from a bunch of U.S. cities. Eden on your doorstep." FROM $550, COMOHOTELS.COM *T.M.*



BELMOND HOTEL SPLENDIDO, Portofino, Italy "It's on a hill overlooking Portofino's glittering harbor, so the views are breathtaking, as are the rooms and gardens. As for the staff, they couldn't be more gracious. You could spend all day hiking in Cinque Terre and then pitch up on the terrace for an aperitif not looking your best, yet still feel extremely welcome." FROM $624, BELMOND.COM *Andrea Grisdale, IC Bellagio*

COMO HOTELS AND RESORTS (PARROT CAY); ARAZAN RESORT AND SPA (PART OF THE ZANZIBAR COLLECTION); LEADING HOTELS OF THE WORLD (LAUCALA ISLAND); LILY'A NA ISRAELE VILLA SEREIA; AMAN RESORTS (AMANPULO); NKWICHI LODGE



A thatched villa at North Island



VILA SEREIA, Brazil "You'll find a rustic peace on the island of Boipeba, off the coast of Salvador, and this is one of the few hotels in Brazil where the bungalows are right on the sand. Expect to be totally pampered by the owner. From Salvador you can take public transport or a taxi, speed boat, or plane." FROM $114, ILHABOIPEBA.ORG *Paul Irvine, Dehouche Travel*



BARAZA RESORT & SPA, Zanzibar "It has just 30 rooms, all villas that look like little Arabian palaces. Meals and most drinks are included, but in contrast to other all-inclusive resorts, the food is terrific. Best of all, it's on the island's most gorgeous stretch of beach. Perfection." FROM $877, BARAZA-ZANZIBAR.COM *N.W. and D.S.*



NKWICHI LODGE, Mozambique "Mainland Africa's most romantic beach, on the shores of Lake Malawi, has white powder sand, crystal clear water, and no crocs! There are lots of hidden coves for private, lazy afternoons in the sun. Some of the five chalets and private houses have luxurious baths built right into the rocks." FROM $660, INCLUDING ALL MEALS, NKWICHI.COM *C.B.*



AMANPULO, Philippines "It's tropical paradise on a private island, only an hour's flight from Manila by charter plane. Swimming, snorkeling, diving, and fishing are the main draw, but the spa and fitness center have enough offerings to keep you occupied for a week." FROM $1,100, AMANRESORTS.COM *Richard Bruce Turen, Churchill & Turen*



BEDARRA, Great Barrier Reef "This wonderfully relaxed all-inclusive property caters to just 16 guests, max (no kids), and feels more like a private house than a resort. Activities include dive trips and fishing excursions, but nothing is more romantic than a candlelight dinner on one of the private beaches." FROM $869, BEDARRA.COM.AU *Stuart Rigg, Southern Crossings*



GILI LANKANFUSHI, Maldives "With its stylish thatch-roof bungalows, underground wine cellar, organic vegetable garden, and incomparable service, Gili Lankanfushi remains the gold standard of barefoot luxury." FROM $1,839, INCLUDING BREAKFAST, GILI-LANKANFUSHI.COM *L.W.*



LAUCALA ISLAND, Fiji "The late Malcolm Forbes's private island is 3,500 acres but has only 25 guest villas, each with its own infinity pool. There's an 18-hole golf course, a dive center, a spa, five restaurants, and a staff that caters to every whim. Few places are as heart-stoppingly beautiful, or decadent." FROM $4,600, INCLUDING MEALS, HOUSE WINES, AND SPIRITS, LAUCALA.COM *T.M.*



ELSEWHERE, Goa, India "Four simply furnished cottages on the best beach in the area, with little to do except relax and enjoy. Nearby is one of the chicest parts of Goa, with cool beach boutiques (including Jade Jagger's) and our favorite restaurant in the area, the always hip La Plage." FROM $185, ASEASCAPE.COM *B. and V.D.*

CLASSIC HOTELS



HOTEL SACHER, Vienna "It has history, charm, and class in spades. The Gürtler family, who have owned the hotel since the 1930s, are all still very hands-on. The entire property was recently renovated, but they've managed to keep the historic feel. And the Blaue Bar is one of the best spots in all of Vienna." FROM $566, SACHER.COM *G.K.*



ESPLANADE ZAGREB, Croatia "One of Europe's great luxury hotels. It was built in the 1920s for the passengers from the Orient Express, and it still radiates the glamour of the Art Deco age." FROM $163, ESPLANADE.HR *Alex Datsev, Exeter International*



CLARIDGE'S, London "It's very British and very elegant. There's one story about the hotel that I just love. Somebody calls the front desk and asks to speak to the king. The desk clerk says, 'Which king, sir? We have three staying here at the moment.' And they did!" FROM $782, CLARIDGES.COM.UK *Jane McCrum, In Any Event*



THE CONNAUGHT, London "It has buckets of character and charm, starting with its magical location on Carlos Place. Then there's its flawless service, classic architecture, famous cocktail bar, great high tea, hidden Aman spa (with a pool!), and the Eagle's Lodge suite—one of my favorite city suites in the world." FROM $897, THE-CONNAUGHT.CO.UK *M.B.*



GRAND-HOTEL DU CAP FERRAT, France "There's an aura to this place, the ne plus ultra of seaside resorts, that has never faded. But it has been notoriously unfriendly over the years. Now that it's part of the Four Seasons group, that should change." FROM $327, FOURSEASONS.COM/CAPFERRAT *T.M.*



HOTEL PLAZA ATHENEE, Paris "If you get a room with a balcony and a view of the Eiffel Tower, you feel as if you could almost touch it. I adore the Alain Ducasse restaurant overlooking the Tuileries, and the breakfast, a proper sit-down affair with feather-light croissants and the most delicious coffee ever." FROM $868, DORCHESTERCOLLECTION.COM *J.M.*



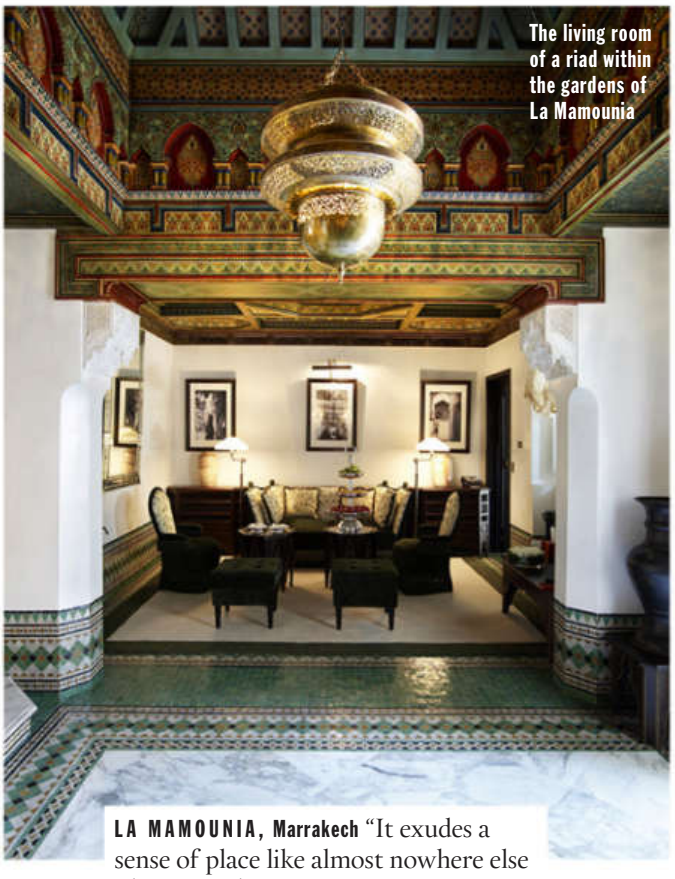
GRAND HOTEL TREMEZZO, Lake Como "It's a classic dating from 1910 and smack on the lake. Greta Garbo stayed in Room 113. But the decor has been updated—you're not staying in a dried-up fossil." FROM $459, GRANDHOTELTREMEZZO.COM. *Brian Dore and Maria Gabriella Landers, Concierge in Umbria*



LE SIRENUSE, Positano, Italy "The hotel just ticks every box. It's a lovely size, and it has a prime location in the heart of Positano, with everything you want on your doorstep. The owner is extremely warm and welcoming, the rooms are beautiful, the pieces of art precious, and stories about the hotel's colorful history could fill a library. Everyone should experience it at least once in a lifetime." FROM $415, SIRENUSE.IT *A.G.*



HOTEL DE RUSSIE, Rome "It has the perfect location, near the Spanish Steps, exemplary service, and some of Rome's best shopping, just moments away." FROM $952, ROCCOFORTEHOTELS.COM/HOTEL-DE-RUSSIE *R.B.T.*



The living room of a riad within the gardens of La Mamounia

LA MAMOUNIA, Marrakech "It exudes a sense of place like almost nowhere else I have ever been. As you sit on your terrace, listening to the birdsong and looking at the palm and orange trees in the garden and the snowcapped Atlas Mountains just beyond, it makes you want to move to Marrakech." FROM $578, MAMOUNIA.COM *J.Z.*

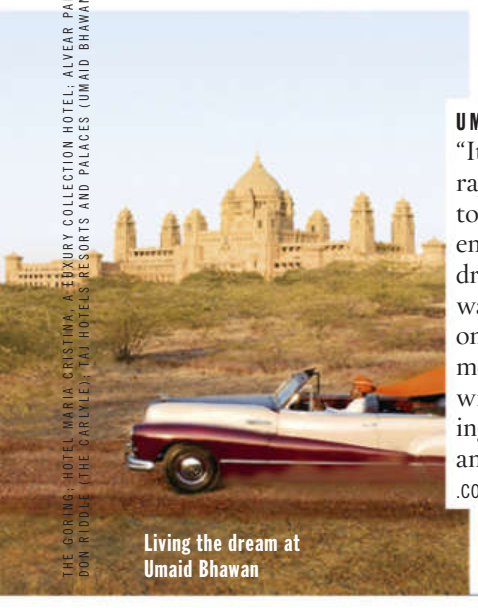
HOTEL SACHER WIEN; ESPLANADE ZAGREB HOTEL ARCHIVE; MAYBOURNE HOTEL GROUP (CLARIDGE'S); THE CONNAUGHT; GRAND HOTEL TREMEZZO LAKE COMO; CHRISTOPH KICHERER (HOTEL PLAZA ATHENEE); MANUEL ZUBLENA (HOTEL DU CAP FERRAT); YDO SOL IMAGES (LE SIRENUSE); ROCCO FORTE HOTELS (HOTEL DE RUSSIE); LA MAMOUNIA



A corridor at the Goring

THE GORING; HOTEL MARIA CRISTINA, A LUXURY COLLECTION HOTEL; ALVEAR PALACE HOTEL; PENINSULA HOTELS; HOTEL LE BRISTOL PARIS; DAVID DUNN (SOFITEL LEGEND METROPOLE HANOI); DON RIDDLE (THE CARLYLE); TAJ HOTELS RESORTS AND PALACES (UMAID BHAWAN PALACE); PAUL THUYSBAERT (FOUR SEASONS ISTANBUL AT SULTANAHMET); PERA PALACE HOTEL JUMEIRAH

THE GORING, London "A masterpiece that is still family-owned. The access to the British Museum is just so much topping on the treacle tart." FROM $536, THEGORING.COM *R.B.T.*



Living the dream at Umaid Bhawan

UMAID BHAWAN PALACE, Jodhpur "It was commissioned by Maharaja Umaid Singh-ji in the 1920s to give the people of Jodhpur employment during a period of drought and famine. When it was finished, in the 1940s, it was one of the world's largest and most opulent private residences, with 26 acres of gardens. Staying here is an absolute dream and privilege." FROM $1,543, TAJHOTELS.COM *B. and V.D.*



HOTEL MARIA CRISTINA, San Sebastian, Spain "Opened in 1912, it feels historic and grand, but it was redone a few years ago, so there's also a vibrancy to the place. Anyone who is anyone stays here during the annual film festival." FROM $697, HOTELMARIACRISTINA.COM *J.Z.*



PERA PALACE HOTEL JUMEIRAH, Istanbul "The original luxury hotel in Istanbul—it dates back to 1892—was renovated a few years back and is classier than ever. The views of the Golden Horn are magical, and it's ideally located, in the Beyoglu district, within walking distance of great restaurants and nightspots." FROM $292, JUMEIRAH.COM *E.S.*



FOUR SEASONS SULTANAHMET, Istanbul "Istanbul's famous neoclassical prison turned hotel is still the best address in the Old City. It has lovely Ottoman details and breathtaking views of Hagia Sophia from the rooftop terrace and several suites. All the major sites, including Topkapi Palace and the Blue Mosque, are just a few minutes' walk." FROM $495, FOURSEASONS.COM *Karen Fedorko Sefer, Sea Song Tours*



THE CARLYLE, New York "A timeless landmark with so much history and tradition, and the Bemelmans Bar. Plus, Woody Allen sometimes plays with his jazz band." FROM $720, ROSEWOODHOTELS.COM *M.B.*



ALVEAR PALACE, Buenos Aires "It's Buenos Aires Belle Epoque preserved, with an ever-fashionable lobby bar and perfect butlers." FROM $420, ALVEARPALACE.COM *M.B.*



PENINSULA HONG KONG "It may be almost 100 years old, but the Peninsula continues to outdo itself. The service, food, bar, and attention to detail are all second to none. It's the best hotel in the world, in my opinion." FROM $449, PENINSULA.COM *Gerald Hatherly, Abercrombie & Kent*

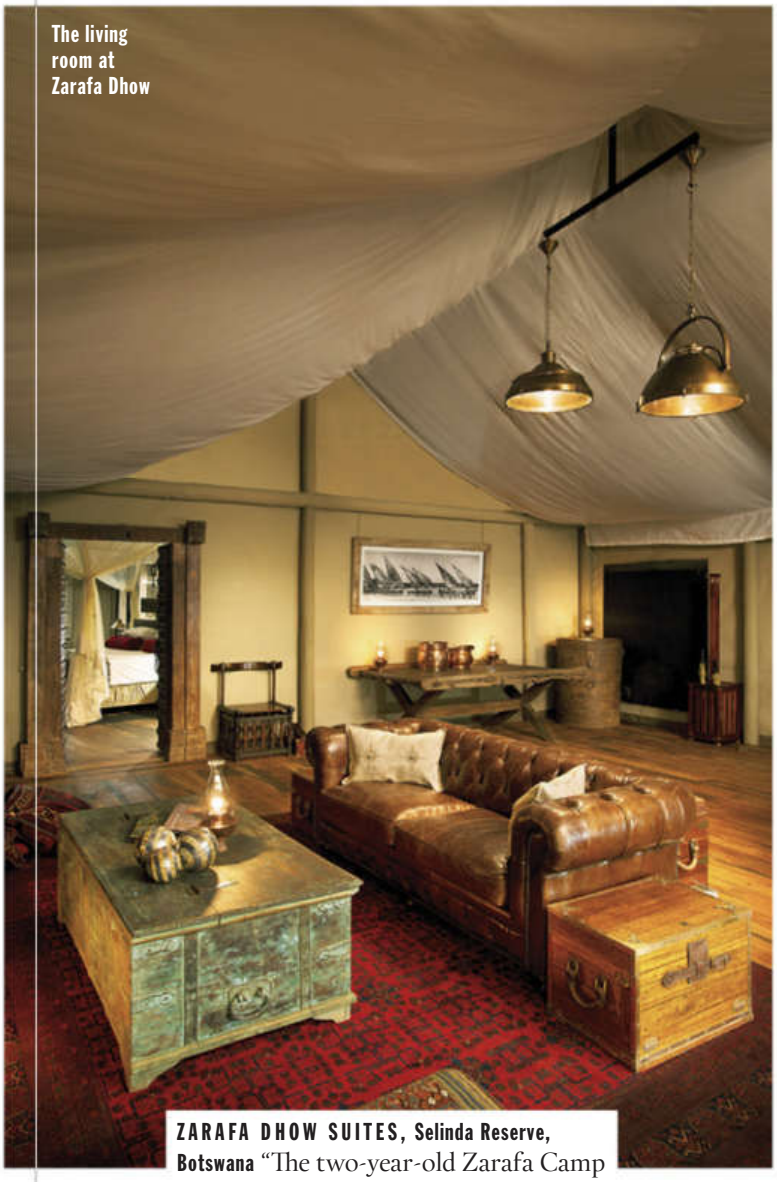


LE BRISTOL, Paris "It's quintessential Parisian elegance, the kind of hotel you stay in during your first dream set in the city." FROM $750, LEBRISTOLPARIS.COM *R.B.T.*



SOFITEL METROPOLE, Hanoi "Exquisitely renovated, it has the absolute best location, in the French Quarter; it radiates Old World European grandeur; and it's part of the city's history. Don't miss the historical tour every evening—it visits the bomb shelter under the bar!" FROM $216, SOFITEL.COM *Sandy Ferguson, Asia Desk*

LUXURY IN THE WILD



The living room at Zarafa Dhow

ZARAFA DHOW SUITES, Selinda Reserve, Botswana "The two-year-old Zarafa Camp is already one of the finest camps in Botswana, but the property's two suites, which are less than a 10-minute drive away, are a cut above. The Dhow Suites are actually one huge tent, with a living room and two large bedrooms, furnished with leather sofas, Persian carpets, and copper bathtubs, all meant to evoke the 1920s luxury safari. What's outside is just as magical: the Zibadianja Lagoon, where animals big and small come to linger. This is the African safari fantasy realized." FROM $6,360, GREATPLAINSCONSERVATION.COM/ZARAFA-DHOW-SUITES *N.W. and D.S.*



SAN LORENZO MOUNTAIN LODGE, South Tyrol, Italy "A few years ago the former CEO of Escada and his wife bought a 16th-century hunting lodge on 40 acres in the heart of the Dolomites, high above a gorgeous valley. They restored every inch of it using local materials and styles, and turned it into a chic four-bedroom chalet with a great sense of place. Wintertime here is sublime, but if you come in the warmer months you can take advantage of the 18-hole golf course." FROM $2,664, SANLORENZOMOUNTAINLODGE.COM *A.G.*



GLACIER LODGE EQI, Greenland "As remote as can be—accessible only by a five-hour boat ride. Accommodations are in modern, minimalist cabins overlooking a fjord and a calving glacier. This isn't luxury, but being so close to raw beauty is glorious!" FROM $292, GLACIERLODGEEQI.COM *M.B.*



GRAND HOTEL KEMPINSKI HIGH TATRAS, Slovakia "Though only two hours from Krakow (three from Bratislava), this lakeside Habsburg-era building, set high in the Slovakian mountains, feels like another world. You can go walking, hiking, or skiing in winter, visit the nearby UNESCO towns, or just do nothing. The perfect get-away-from-it-all place." FROM $158, KEMPINSKI.COM *G.K.*



THE THREE CHIMNEYS, Isle of Skye, Scotland "One of the best restaurants in Scotland doubles as an elegant small inn. It's in the middle of nowhere, on a seaside road you'll swear is headed straight to America, but a seafood feast and a divine room wait for you at the end of the journey." FROM $537, THREECHIMNEYS.CO.UK *J. M.*



BOUTIQUE HOTEL QUINTA CHANABNAL, Palenque, Mexico "The incredible archaeological site of Palenque needed a good hotel, and this little gem is it, eight rooms hidden in the jungle just a few miles from the ruins. The Italian-German owner, an authority on Mayan culture, modeled it after a royal residence, complete with a massive palapa thatch roof and traditional sweat bath. The pool is very pleasant, and the food is excellent." FROM $177, QUINTACHANABNAL.COM *Z.R.*



ESTANCIA RINCON DEL SOCORRO, Argentina "My favorite secluded wildlife lodge in South America, it's in the underrated Esteros del Iberá wetlands in northeastern Argentina, accessible by light aircraft (two hours from Iguazu, one from Posadas), or by driving (off-road) six hours. A back-of-beyond location and luxurious accommodations in a beautiful ranch home." FROM $220, RINCONDELSOCORRO.COM/EN/ *P.I.*

GREAT PLAINS CONSERVATION/BEVERLY JOUBERT (ZARAFA DHOW SUITES); ANGUS BREMNER (THE THREE CHIMNEYS); HOTEL QUINTA CHANABNAL; FELIX L. STECK (GRAND HOTEL KEMPINSKI HIGH TATRAS); RINO RASMUSSEN (GLACIER LODGE EQI)



The boatlike exterior of the Fogo Island Inn

FOGO ISLAND INN, Newfoundland "Said to be far away from far away, Fogo Island requires two flights and a ferry to reach, and the landscape is all craggy rocks and barren coastline. But I don't know anyone who has been there who hasn't fallen deeply in love with the inn, whose purpose is to revive the economy of this former fishing village and preserve its traditions. There are little winks at the island's heritage everywhere, and the handcrafted furniture is a modern riff on the island's boatbuilding and woodworking past." FROM $671, FOGOISLANDINN.CA *Marc Telio, Entrée Canada*



AHILYA FORT, India "To reach Ahilya Fort, an 18th-century fortress turned extraordinary small hotel on the banks of the vast Narmada River, you need to fly to Indore, then drive 59 miles. But it's worth the trouble. This place, right next to an ancient temple, has just 13 rooms, including a large tent, all surrounded by shady courtyards and pretty gardens." FROM $287, AHILYAFORT.COM *B. and V.D.*



MAHUA KOTHI AND BANJAAR TOLA, India "The best place to see India's most majestic tigers are in Bandhavgarh and Kanha National Parks, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Our two favorite camps there are very different from each other. Mahua Kothi is more old-fashioned, Banjaar Tola more modern, but both spoil you rotten, and you're practically guaranteed to see tigers on game drives at either one. This is our idea of heaven." FROM $433, TAJSAFARIS.COM *B. and V.D.*



GALAPAGOS SAFARI CAMP, Ecuador "One of the first luxury eco-camps in the Galápagos, it accommodates only 24 guests and is built sustainably in the highlands on the island of Santa Cruz. You might wake up to find a 100-year-old giant tortoise slumbering next to your tent." FROM $695, GALAPAGOSSAFARICAMP.COM *A.N.*



WILDWATERS LODGE, Uganda "On an island in the middle of the Nile, this lodge has 10 chalets, with six perched above the rapids—a great spot for spying on the wildlife of the Wildwaters Reserve. You'll see throngs of river otters and giant monitor lizards, as well as hundreds of birds. Rafting on the Nile is the main event, but nearby you can also go quad biking, bungee jumping, or horseback riding. This is not your typical African safari." FROM $230, WILD-UGANDA.COM *C.B.*



TSWALU KALAHARI RESERVE, South Africa "Surrounded by 220,000 acres of monumental mountains and wilderness in the heart of the Kalahari Desert, this is one of the largest privately owned conservation areas in Africa. Spend the days on game drives or bush walks, riding horses, and visiting archaeological sites. At sunset the staff sets up lanterns on the sand dunes, just in time for drinks under that immense sky." FROM $846, TSWALU.COM *J.H.*



SONGTSAM LODGES, Yunnan, China "A series of exquisite eight- to 10-room lodges surrounded by high mountain valleys, alpine meadows, and sacred mountains, each is furnished with Tibetan furniture, textiles, and art. There's a good restaurant that uses locally grown produce. A truly wonderful mountain experience." FROM $154, SONGTSAM.COM *G.H.*



WOLWEDANS BOULDERS CAMP, Namibia "In the Namib desert of southern Namibia, an area surrounded by massive boulder outcrops and vast open spaces, this is a luxe base to return to after your days of walking safaris, treading the ancient hunting grounds of the Bushmen." FROM $481, WOLWEDANS.COM *C.B.*



MIKENO LODGE, Democratic Republic of the Congo "This jewel within Virunga National Park has a dozen spacious, luxurious bungalows, each with beautiful views of the Rift Valley and the Nyiragongo and Mikeno volcanoes." FROM $244, VISITVIRUNGA.ORG *C.B.*

ALEX FRADKIN (FOGO ISLAND INN); TAJ HOTELS RESORTS AND PALACES (MAHUA KOTHI, BANJAAR TOLA); AHILYA FORT; SONGTSAM LODGE; TSWALU KALAHARI RESERVE; WILDWATER LODGE; WOLWEDANS; LUANNE CADD (MIKENO LODGE); GALAPAGOS SAFARI CAMP



Tierra Patagonia's Uma Spa

TIERRA PATAGONIA HOTEL & SPA, Chile "An ultramodern hideaway in one of the planet's most spectacular landscapes, at the eastern edge of Torres del Paine National Park. James Bond would look right at home at the bar." FROM $2,250, TIERRAHOTELS.COM *Ashton Palmer, ExpeditionTrips*



Outdoor dining at Dar Ahlam

DAR AHLAM, Skoura Oasis, Morocco "You're in a rebuilt kasbah in a Saharan oasis a five-hour drive from Marrakech, yet you're in the lap of bespoke luxury, each experience custom-made. Fabulous excursions include a night in a desert camp in the dunes. You'll never want to leave." FROM $537, MAISONDESREVES.COM *J.Z.*



THE BRANDO, French Polynesia "We've all heard about it, but hardly anyone ever got to see Marlon Brando's legendary hideaway, and now that we have, it's even better than we imagined. Brando bought a string of 12 islets; the new resort is on one of them, with 35 humongous beach villas surrounded by absolutely nothing but a translucent sea. It's the place for anyone looking for absolute privacy, but unlike other luxury hideouts, this one is relatively accessible, especially from the West Coast." FROM $2,623, THEBRANDO.COM *T.M.*



FOUR SEASONS TENTED CAMP, Golden Triangle, Thailand "The tents here are beautifully appointed and suggest a luxe version of Dr. Livingstone–meets–Henry Stanley: all teak wood and colonial charm. Tour the surrounding area on an elephant's back." FROM $1,959, FOURSEASONS.COM *G.H.*



AMANKORA, Bhutan "Visitors usually travel among the five Amankora lodges, which are built high in the Himalayas. Each one takes full advantage of its spectacular mountain setting. These are remarkable properties that make you think about who you are and what you can be." FROM $930, AMANRESORTS.COM *R.B.T.*



MINARET STATION, New Zealand "A luxury lodge with chalets set in a glacial valley accessible only by helicopter, allowing outdoor enthusiasts remarkable access to the splendor of New Zealand's Southern Alps." FROM $1,319, MINARETSTATION.COM *R.B.T.*



MUANG LA RESORT, Laos "A six-hour drive from Luang Prabang, this is a charming ecolodge that was built among the mists of the ancient forest, next to a natural hot spring." FROM $280, MUANGLA.COM/EN *S.F.*



BERKELEY RIVER LODGE, Kimberley Coast, Australia "Accessible only by a scenic flight from Darwin or Kununurra, the lodge has elegant guest villas with uninterrupted vistas of the Timor Sea, the Berkeley River, and the rugged Australian Outback. Creature comforts can include gourmet meals tailored to suit individual tastes." FROM $600, BERKELEYRIVER.COM.AU *S.R.*



SIX SENSES LAAMU, Maldives "The only resort in the Laamu Atoll, Six Senses is an amazing place for snorkeling and diving. If you want utterly private and remote, the property has its own deserted island a 30-minute boat ride away, which might be the most beautiful spot in the Indian Ocean." FROM $856, SIXSENSES.COM *L.W.*

TIERRA HOTELS (TIERRA PATAGONIA); RELAIS & CHATEAUX (DAR AHLAM); THE BRANDO; MINARET STATION; SIX SENSES HOTELS RESORTS SPAS; MUANG LA RESORT; AMAN RESORTS (AMANKORA); FOUR SEASONS TENTED CAMP; BERKELEY RIVER LODGE

CITY SUITES



ATIK PASHA SUITE, FOUR SEASONS BOSPHORUS, Istanbul "A modern-day Ottoman palace: 15-foot ceilings, a private hammam, and spectacular views of the Bosphorus." FROM $25,337, FOURSEASONS.COM/BOSPHORUS *K.F.S.*



SYDNEY SUITE, PARK HYATT, Sydney "Nearly 3,900 square feet overlooking Sydney Harbor, with a state-of-the-art kitchen, steam room, and sauna. And the views! Even the $7,400 music-playing toilet has one." FROM $12,577, SYDNEY.PARK.HYATT.COM *S.R.*



PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, MANDARIN ORIENTAL, Tokyo "It has the right blend of size, very high-end furnishings and amenities, and incredible views, including (on a clear day) Mount Fuji." FROM $11,270; MANDARINORIENTAL.COM/TOKYO *D.T.*



THE ONE ABOVE PENTHOUSE, THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO, Cape Town "Two stories spread over a colossal 15,000 square feet, it has everything you'd want in your penthouse apartment, including a private gym, two pools, an outdoor bar, and access to a very well-stocked wine cellar. But it's the wraparound terraces with 360-degree vistas that make this one of the finest pieces of real estate in Cape Town. It's a hell of a place to throw a party, and, luckily, the penthouse comes with a butler and chef to help with that." FROM $6,255, THEROYALPORTFOLIO.COM *J.H.*



LA MANSION PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, FOUR SEASONS, Buenos Aires "The 2,000 square feet of this historic mansion come with a private balcony overlooking the hotel gardens, 18th-century antiques, and a splendid marble bathtub where Madonna, who stayed here during the filming of *Evita*, is said to have taken daily ice baths." FROM $465, FOURSEASONS.COM *P.I.*



ROYAL PENTHOUSE, THE CORINTHIA, London "Seriously opulent: a wine cellar, private lift, state-of-the-art study, and, most striking, a huge terrace with an unbelievable view over the Thames. There is no better spot in London for watching New Year's fireworks." FROM $28,113, CORINTHIA.COM *J.E.*



PADEREWSKI SUITE, THE BRISTOL HOTEL, Warsaw "It may not be as modern or up-to-date as other grand suites, but talk about history! Jan Paderewski, piano virtuoso and onetime Polish prime minister, built the hotel in 1901 and lived in this suite (now a national monument) off and on. The private balcony overlooking Warsaw's Royal Route is to die for." FROM $2,530, HOTELBRISTOLWARSAW.PL/EN *G.K.*



ROYAL IMPERIAL SUITE, THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, New Delhi "Like the hotel itself, this suite oozes history. Much of the fine detail of India's partition agreement was worked out here by Nehru, Gandhi, Jinnah, and Lord Mountbatten. The walls are covered with fabulous artworks by Prince Alexis Soltykoff, and the sitting room/ballroom is a perfect place for entertaining. We recently threw a party here for 50 people." FROM $3,826, THEIMPERIALINDIA.COM *B. and V.D.*



WINTER GARDEN SUITES, ARARAT PARK HYATT, Moscow "All recently redone, with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Bolshoi Theatre and the Kremlin. A good excuse to have breakfast in your room!" FROM $1,638, PARK.HYATT.COM *G.T.*

THE ROYAL SUITE, FOUR SEASONS, Florence "If you want to see what it was like to be a Medici, book the Royal Suite. It's covered in frescoes and filled with chandeliers and exquisite furniture, but somehow it doesn't seem overdone. It still feels bright and airy—like your very own palazzo in Florence." FROM $17,288; FOURSEASONS/FLORENCE *T.M.*



The opulent hall of the Royal Suite

CORINTHIA HOTEL LONDON: MATTHEW SHAW (HOTEL BRISTOL WARSAW); HYATT HOTELS & RESORTS (ARARAT PARK HYATT, PARK HYATT SYDNEY); XAVIER VERSTRAETEN (FOUR SEASONS BUENOS AIRES); THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO (THE ONE ABOVE); MANDARIN ORIENTAL, TOKYO; BARBARA KRAFT (FOUR SEASONS FLORENCE); PETER VITALE (FOUR SEASONS BOSPHORUS)

FAMILY GETAWAYS



PADASTE MANOR, Estonia "Bike, hike, and boat all day—you're on Muhu Island, in the Baltic—then come in for a four-course gourmet dinner. Pädaste is perfectly done and ideal for families looking for time together, outdoor activities, and history." FROM $187, SLH.COM/PADASTE *G.T.*



MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH, California "Kids and adults love this place equally, with all rooms facing the ocean, a dedicated kids pool, tide pools, and a terrific kids club. The staff also go the extra mile—it welcomes children before they arrive, and sends a funny postcard months later." FROM $795, MONTAGEHOTELS.COM *R.B.T.*



GLENEAGLES, Scotland "Sure, it's famous for its golf courses, but there's so much else to do: hiking, fishing, falconry, archery, off-road driving (in a Range Rover). There's also an equestrian center, a kids club, a spa, beautiful swimming pools, and four restaurants, including one that specializes in Scotch beef and another that has two Michelin stars. I can't think of a place better suited for a sporty family." FROM $398, GLENEAGLES.COM *J.E.*



RITZ-CARLTON BACHELOR GULCH, Beaver Creek, Colorado "There's a 'ski nanny' who delivers the children to their lessons, keeps them entertained afterward, and brings them back at the end of the day. At night the whole family can go ziplining, ice skating, or snowmobiling off the property, then consult with the 's'mores sommelier' back at the resort. He can help with those really tough decisions, like what kind of chocolate to put on your graham cracker." FROM $329, RITZCARLTON.COM/BACHELORGULCH *Meg Austin, The Travel Society*



MANDARIN ORIENTAL, Bodrum, Turkey "A sophisticated resort on a picture-perfect coastline that caters to kids as well as grown-ups. There's a children's pool, a playground, a complimentary kids club, a kids menu, and a video game room for teenagers. Plus, babysitting services in case you want to go to the spa for a few hours—and trust me, you do." FROM $1,200, MANDARINORIENTAL.COM/BODRUM *K.F.S.*



KIAWAH RESORT, South Carolina "It has a charming Southern feel, a beautiful coastline, and a wealth of programs for kids of all ages, like dolphin excursions, alligator walks, tideland treasure hunts, sailing lessons, and a family Olympics." FROM $240, KIAWAHRESORT.COM *M.B.*



A private pool at the One & Only Wolgan Valley

EMIRATES ONE & ONLY, Wolgan Valley, Australia "It's like a posh summer camp for families. Wolgan Valley's wide open spaces and array of nature-based activities will particularly appeal to older children. Horseback riding, mountain biking, archery, and uniquely Australian wildlife encounters ensure that the kids (and grown-ups) get outdoors and active. Each of the freestanding guest suites has its own private plunge pool, and there's a shared playroom packed with books, games, toys, and craft supplies, as well as a kids menu at the restaurant and babysitting services." FROM $1,493, WOLGANVALLEY.ONEANDONLYRESORTS.COM *S.R.*



LLAO LLAO HOTEL & RESORT, Argentina "In a remote lakeside location, yet still less than an hour's drive from the Bariloche airport, it's a superb and hassle-free option for families. Room rates include a daily kids club for three- to 10-year-olds, with a wide array of activities, from painting and cooking classes to nature walks in the woods, and, for older kids, guided mountain-bike rides and rappelling." FROM $245, LLAOLLAO.COM *P.I.*



AWASI ATACAMA, Chile "It's always a real hit, principally because the staff are very switched-on. It gives the kids their own travel diaries, organizes treasure hunts, sets up arts and crafts sessions with local artisans, and teaches astronomy classes, among the dozens of activities. There is a slight educational slant to most of the programs, which is always popular with the parents." FROM $2,480 FOR A THREE-NIGHT STAY, AWASIATACAMA.COM *P.I.*



JOHANNES HOIMOJA (PADASTE MANOR); BARBARA KRAFT (MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH); EMIRATES ONE & ONLY; AWASI ATACAMA; LLAO LLAO HOTEL & RESORT GOLF-SPA; CHRIS ROGERS (KIAWAH RESORT); GEORGE APOSTOULIS (MANDARIN ORIENTAL BODRUM); THE GLENEAGLES HOTEL; RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL COMPANY LLC (BACHELOR GULCH)





A trail ride at the Ranch at Rock Creek

THE RANCH AT ROCK CREEK, Montana "Its Granite Lodge gives you lush mountain scenery and a fairly authentic Western experience (rodeo, stagecoach rides). In the warmer months you can go fly-fishing, mountain biking, and more. In winter there's cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ice skating. There's even a bowling alley." FROM $800, THERANCHATROCKCREEK.COM *T.M.*

CLAYOQUOT WILDERNESS RESORT, Vancouver Island "I've come here for years. It's one of the few places where we have always been comfortable letting the children do their own thing—feeding the horses or using the trampoline. Between the kayaking, whale-watching trips, and bear watching, there's something for everyone. And the safari-style tents are wonderful." FROM $4,550 FOR ADULTS, $2,274 FOR CHILDREN (FOR FOUR NIGHTS), WILDRETREAT.COM *M.T.*



The dining tent at Clayoquot

RANCH AT ROCK CREEK: GROOTBOS; AMAN RESORTS (AMANBAGH); STEVIE MANN (SARUNI SAMBURU); TIERRA HOTELS (TIERRA ATACAMA); RELAIS & CHATEAUX (CLAYOQUOT WILDERNESS RESORT)



TIERRA ATACAMA, Chile "It isn't quite as upscale or as private as Awasi—at Tierra you can dine at communal tables and go on excursions with other guests. But that's part of the fun. Tierra is also family-owned, so the service feels very personal and old-fashioned." FROM $1,350 (FOR TWO NIGHTS), TIERRAHOTELS.COM *Marisol Mosquera, Aracari*



SARUNI SAMBURU, Kenya "Not only does it have immense family 'villas' with two bedrooms, and two pools at the camp, but the expertly trained guides are all Samburu warriors—a big thrill for the kids. Aside from the game drives and bush walks, the guides teach basic warrior skills (how to throw a spear, track an animal, build a fire), and they take you to nearby villages and schools. It's not touristy but as authentic as it gets." FROM $460 FOR ADULTS, $240 FOR CHILDREN, SARUNISAMBURU.COM *N.W. and D.S.*



GROOTBOS, South Africa "It may sound boring—a nature reserve outside Hermanus, southeast of Cape Town—but it's not. The landscape is exquisite, the resort's modern design is stunning, and it offers many fun activities, including whale watching from a small plane and overnight hiking and camping trips." FROM $220, GROOTBOS.COM *J.Z.*



AMANBAGH, Jaipur, India "This place is tried-and-true, based on my stay with my two- and four-year-olds. The highlights included a camel ride in the countryside and a visit to the surrounding villages, where we met local children. We also loved the heated swimming pool, the bicycles available to borrow, and the army of staff intent on making sure we were all happy. We never wanted to leave." FROM $550, AMANRESORTS.COM *B. and V.D.* «

MOUNTAIN TIME

ASPEN? AMALFI COAST? IN THE REALM OF *TRAVEL BRAGGING*, NOTHING CARRIES QUITE *THE PUNCH* OF *TREKKING* IN THE HIMALAYAS.

By Kevin Doyle

Some men buy sports cars to deal with the arrival of midlife. Others buy mistresses. My reaction to staring into the yawning maw of the dwindling days ahead of me was a sudden urge to say that I had trekked in the Himalayas. It's a boast that has such a ring of the triumphant about it, conjuring images of Sir Edmund Hillary and epic slogs through thigh-high snowdrifts in mountain air too thin to support anything but lichen and hardy grasses. It's the sort of atomic bomb of travel-bragging that's fun to drop at cocktail parties because it leaves most people struck dumb, especially after they've just rattled on about comparatively pedestrian destinations, like Aspen or the Amalfi Coast. The Himalayas! Whether you pronounce it with the stress on the third syllable, as we're taught to do in junior high geography class, or on the second, as the more worldly (or pretentious) among us do, the word is magic: It casts a spell. So I embraced the cliché and went to India with my partner Ricky to mark one of life's not-so-little milestones: the passage from probably middle-aged to undeniably middle-aged. This was going to be a trip to test our limits, and to prove to ourselves (not that we had any doubts) that we still had some spring in our struts.

Nobody would have to know that we never actually hiked any higher than about 9,100 feet, where there's oxygen to spare; that the only cold weather condition we had to contend with was a dusting of frost; or that we were accompanied by a small village of people whose sole aim was to attend to needs we didn't even know we had.

Our luxury trekking holiday in the foothills of the Himalayas, organized by the Indian travel company Shakti, was straightforward enough. We'd spend five days on long but not terribly strenuous hikes in northern India, in the state of Uttarakhand, within shouting distance of the border with Nepal and Tibet and in full view of the sawtooth majesty of the Himalayan peaks. We'd sleep in historic village homes that Shakti has leased from locals and spruced up to luxury standards, or we'd camp on a mountainside, in a dome tent, swaddled in cashmere and goose down, like a couple of princely papooses. We'd spend the final two nights at Shakti 360° Leti, the company's hilltop compound, recovering from our days of trekking with gourmet meals and general pampering.

Until the middle of day three, it was all a breeze. We hiked at a leisurely pace through oak and pine forest where pheasant and barking deer hide among the ferns, and through the cool and sparkling air of the hilly countryside, stopping at temples, watching men in the fields steer plows pulled by oxen, and generally taking in village life.

So we were surprised and even felt a bit deceived when on the third day we found ourselves on what seemed like an alpine death

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KEVIN DOYLE (2); JULIAN KINGMA

EYES ON THE PRIZE
Conquering the peaks of India's Himalayas is sublime—but so are the luxuries of the deluxe Shakti 360° Leti when you're done (*right*).







NEAR NIRVANA
Praveen Singh, a waiter, does breakfast setup at 360° Leti (now a Relais & Châteaux). The chef, Yeshi, a former monk, works his magic under a portrait of the Dalai Lama and is happy to share techniques.



HITTING YOUR STRIDE Not all Himalayan hiking involves boulders and vertiginous heights. At lower altitudes in the state of Uttarakhand, you can take in temples, fields, and village life.

WE HAD A VIEW OF TERRACED FIELDS THAT CARPETED THE ENTIRE VALLEY IN DEEP GREEN. THE *SOUND OF DRUMS* AND *WOMEN SINGING* WAFTED UP FROM A WEDDING PARTY FAR BELOW.



GLASS HOUSE
Philip Johnson would have approved of the four guest cabins at the 360° Leti compound. Their glass walls frame snow-dusted peaks by day, star-studded skies by night.

JULIAN KINGMA. OPPOSITE: SHAKTI HIMALAYA

march, led endlessly up a series of very steep inclines by our guide. After a couple of hours the tops of my thighs burned as if they were being seared in a skillet, my lungs ached for more air, and my heart was trying to jackhammer itself right out of my chest.

From the look of it, Ricky, an inveterate urbanite with a flair for the dramatic, wasn't faring much better. "I'm frigging 58 years old!" he cried out as his legs lost their stuffing and he collapsed into what could only be described as a small, sad heap. "Are you trying to kill me?"

We had hiked only halfway up the second of four escarpments that we had to traverse that day to make camp by evening, but we could go no farther. "It's okay, guys," said our raven-ponytailed guide, Navarino Narah (or "Rino"), in the sort of comforting tone you'd expect to hear in a hospice. "We're almost there. Just rest here for a while."

I really shouldn't have been surprised: India has always had a way of pushing me out of my comfort zone. On my first trip there I spent days reporting a story in the steamy, teeming alleyways of Mumbai's largest slum. But amid the rivers of garbage I was welcomed into the lives of remarkable—and remarkably generous—people. Several years later I traveled to Kolkata and Delhi to profile Hillary Clinton. She was secretary of state, and I was mostly in a state of delirium from a fever that was being passed around her press corps. But I caught on that trip my first glimpse of India's exquisite, decrepit beauty, which had eluded me the first time. In 2013 I traveled to India again, to report on the Kumbh Mela, a mass Hindu pilgrimage and the largest gathering of people on the planet. I dreaded going because of my preternatural aversion to crowds and chaos. But I did go, and while there had what I can only describe as a profoundly mystical experience as I bathed, quite unexpectedly, in the Ganges. That's the thing about India: It has always given back much more than it has ever asked of me.

NOBODY WOULD HAVE TO KNOW THAT WE WERE ACCOMPANIED BY A *SMALL VILLAGE* OF PEOPLE WHOSE *SOLE AIM* WAS TO ATTEND TO NEEDS *WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD.*

It would have been hard to find a better place to collapse. We had staggered into a level clearing of soft grass studded with rhododendron trees and great chunks of quartz that sparkled like rhinestones. In the far distance the five sharp peaks of the Panchachuli Mountains poked out in striking whiteness above the forested tops of an intervening range.

After three days of hiking we were familiar with, but no less impressed by, the lunchtime routine. Rino unfurled a large yellow wool blanket on the grass and then, with great care and precision, laid out two silk place mats and settings of copper plates and cups, cutlery, and white cloth napkins rolled in silver rings. Then, from a large woven picnic basket that seemed to materialize out of nowhere, he unpacked our lunch of savory green peppers stuffed with lamb and rice and spiced with cumin and sweetened with raisins, a light and lemony hummus served with freshly made chapati bread, and toasted broccoli studded with sweet cloves of baked garlic. We washed it all down with chilled rhododendron juice and finished off the meal with soft homemade chocolate chip cookies.

Rino, who had left us alone to enjoy our Himalayan *déjeuner sur l'herbe*, joined us for a cup of tea. At 28, he is possessed of a much older soul and the bearing of a Zen master. He comes from a small town in Arunachal Pradesh, India's farthest northeastern state, which borders Tibet, Burma, and Bhutan. A member of the animistic Mishing tribe, he is an autodidact extraordinaire who speaks English as properly as any Cambridge don.

"It certainly helps to speak English. People who do are elevated in the minds of most Indians," Rino explained. "There's a lot of racism against people from my state, and generally people from the northeast of India. We get called names like Chow Mein, but when I speak English, it changes people's impression. It can get you out of tricky situations."

The three of us lay on our backs. The sun felt warm on my face in the cool mountain air. A lone griffon vulture circled in the cloudless sky, its wings motionless as it rode the thermal currents.

"That was delicious, Rino," Ricky said. "Is that the way you eat in your part of the country?"

"We eat a lot of goat and pig and chicken," Rino said. "I've eaten elephant on an occasion or two. It's sweet and chewy. Dog is considered a delicacy in many parts of northeast India, such as Nagaland and Arunachal, but I won't tell you any more about that, for I fear it might put you off."

Ricky and I held our tongues, banishing thoughts of our beloved mutt Lucy being cooked on a spit. "How much longer will we be hiking today?" Ricky asked, as much out of a genuine desire to know as a genuine need to change the subject.

"Three hours," Rino said. If his comments on canine cuisine had not put us off, this bit of news certainly did.

We spent the rest of the afternoon hauling ourselves uphill, scrambling over boulders on all fours like clumsy crabs, and following narrow footpaths along the tops of vertiginous ridges while doing our best not to look down at how far we could tumble from a misstep. Rino was in the lead, assuaging our fears, offering encouragement and the occasional hoist, while I brought up the rear, ensuring that Ricky could not about-face and retreat at any of the many points of peril, real or perceived. (He had conveniently waited until he was in the Himalayas to disclose his fear of heights.)

It is only a slight exaggeration to say that after hiking at a snail's pace of six miles in six hours we stumbled wearily into camp at dusk with a pride in our accomplishment and a gratitude for our journey's end akin to what Hannibal and his army must have felt on entering the Po River Valley. And, speaking of armies, we were greeted by an industrious legion that had arrived before us to set up camp, heat the water for our showers, and prepare dinner. A wooden vanity was set up in the open air so that the peaks were framed in its mirror to optimal effect. There was a small tent for bucket showers and another, set well away from the rest, that contained a wooden commode that I would bet looked out onto the most staggering view of any toilet in the world. We nicknamed this "the loo with a view."

OPPOSITE: JULIAN KINGMA (4)



COLD COMFORT
When not camping or staying at 360° Leti, Shakti guests sleep in spruced-up historic homes (with fine linens and all) like this one in the village of Deora. *Right:* Fuel for the ubiquitous and atmospheric fires.





TABLE MANNERS
Lunches served during hikes are presented with white cloth napkins in silver rings, freshly made chapati bread, and chilled rhododendron juice. *Left:* Foot traffic in Chirala village.



About 50 paces from the yellow dome tent where Ricky and I would sleep, some thoughtful boy scout had built a buxom campfire of scavenged oak branches and set three folding canvas chairs around it facing the mountains, which were much closer now that we had tramped toward them all day. Only a handful were visible, as a long line of clouds was rolling in like an unfurling bolt of white chiffon that filled in the valleys and covered the lower mountains. They settled low around the knife point summit of Nanda Devi, India's second-tallest mountain, covering all but the head and shoulders of the peak the locals call "the bliss-giving goddess." Just as the sun slipped behind the towering, jagged range, it cast a deep pink glow on the clouds and on Nanda Devi herself, making her look rouged, robed in rose finery, and ready to step out for the night.

The sun soon dropped well below the peaks, leaving behind a sky as gray as flint, and the temperature, which had held in the mid-60s all day, started to slip into the range just right for chilling beer. The campsite was a barren and uneven—almost stepped—tundra landscape. Our young, ruddy-cheeked waiter, Praveen, brought us warming cups of chai and freshly popped corn, as Ricky, Rino, and I moved our chairs closer to the fire, the fat orange flames of which licked at the cold night air in every direction.

Ricky had never camped before and was full of questions about the possible hazards of sleeping without walls.

"Are there any snakes here?" he asked Rino.

"Snakes? No, not at this elevation," Rino said, smiling reassuringly.

"What about tigers?" Ricky inquired, not able to leave well enough alone.

"You probably wouldn't find tigers here," Rino said.

I wanted to change the subject, but before I could think of something to say, Rino added, "But 13 men have been killed by a leopard over the past couple of years." There followed a moment of silence and then a sort of croak from wide-eyed Ricky. "Yes," Rino said, matter-of-factly (probably because it was a matter of fact). "All of them were drunk when they were killed, and several of them had their genitals chewed off." "No wine for me tonight," I said, feeling a sudden chill.

Rino left Ricky and me alone for dinner, joining the others in a large tent where the staff cooked and ate their meals. The air was so cold by dinnertime that Ricky and I decided to eat inside our own dining tent, which the staff had set up a few paces from the fire. It made me laugh to look across a table set so elegantly that it could have been lifted from the finest restaurant in Delhi, to see Ricky wearing thermal gloves and a down jacket with the hood cinched so tight only a sliver of his face peered out. We could see our breath between bites of fragrant mutton curry, potatoes, and mustard greens, and each time the fire showed any sign of flagging, a staffer would appear and revive it by laying on fresh branches. After dinner we soaked up the fire's heat, hypnotized by the dance of its flames and the occasional flurry of sparks it would belch out, which the wind would carry skyward until they were indistinguishable from the stars.

Our tent was a snug affair, just big enough for the two of us, an air mattress and feather bed, a plump goose down duvet, and a few cashmere blankets. We each wore three or four layers and a thermal hat, which, along with the bedding and the hot water bottles that the staff had thoughtfully placed in our bed, kept us toasty, even as the temperature dipped into the low 30s. It was perfectly comfortable, and I'm sure I would have slept soundly had I not for bedtime reading foolishly opened *Man-Eaters of Kumaon*, by Jim Corbett, a colonial-era hunter turned conservationist so beloved for killing elusive man-eating tigers and leopards that there's a national park in Uttarakhand named for him.

"A leopard," Corbett wrote, "on finding his food supply cut off, takes to killing human beings." He goes on to note, in so many words, that we're the Chipotle of the food chain: Once big cats get a taste of us, they just can't get enough. Two leopards alone killed 525 people in Kumaon in the early 20th century, and the famous Champawat tiger killed almost that many on her own before a bullet fired by Corbett brought an end to her feeding times for good.

But what really chilled me, and later that night led to a battle between my fear and my bladder (fear won), was his description of finding all that remained of a teenage girl whom a tiger had carried off from the fields: "In all the…years I have hunted man-eaters I have not seen anything as pitiful as that young comely leg—bitten off a little below the knee as cleanly [CONTINUED ON PAGE 114]

TIPS & TACTICS

LOFTY AMBITION

Shakti offers luxury walking trips in India's scenic mountain regions, such as Kumaon (one of Uttarakhand state's two regions, along with Garhwal). With the exception of the nights spent camping in Kumaon, which are optional, accommodations are in stone or brick homes in villages like Deora and Kana, which are leased from locals and have been stylishly renovated, with modern bathrooms and luxury bedding. Meals—in the village homes, at camp, or at 360° Leti—include Indian, Thai, Burmese, and Mediterranean dishes prepared to such a high standard that 360° Leti was recently designated a Relais & Châteaux property. Service is uniformly gracious and impeccable. $5,849 PER PERSON FOR THE EIGHT-NIGHT KUMAON JOURNEY, INCLUDING ALL DRINKS, MEALS, AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION; SHAKTIHIMALAYA.COM

Those less inclined to sleep in a tent might consider a six-night package that includes private accommodation in three village houses, three nights at 360° Leti, and all activities, guides, meals, drinks, and transfers. $4,675 PER PERSON

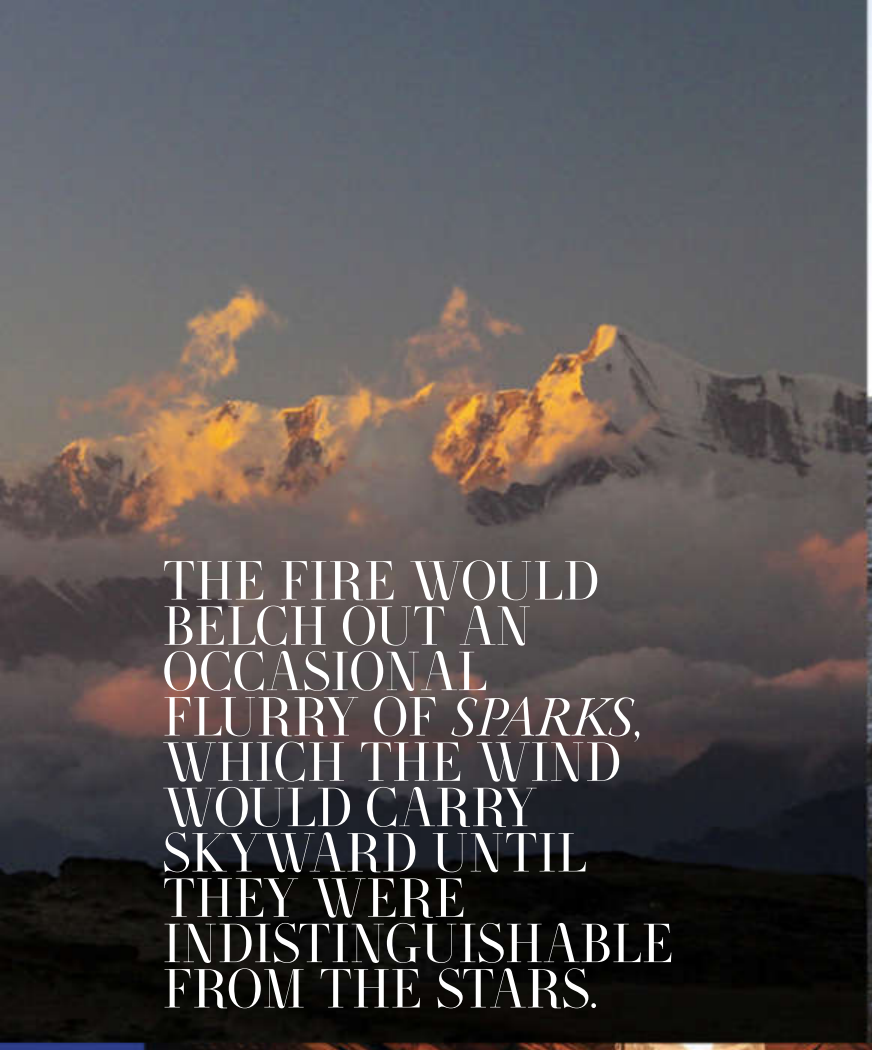
Shakti Kumaon journeys begin in Kathgodam, which can be reached from Delhi by a basic, comfortable reserved-seat express train departing at 6:15 a.m. and arriving before noon (ABOUT $20).

In Delhi the Lodhi Hotel is a sanctuary that offers exceptional service and sunny, sprawling, and comfortable contemporary rooms, each with a plunge pool. The spa is superb; a massage on arrival will make all things right after the long flight. DOUBLES FROM ABOUT $450, INCLUDING BREAKFAST AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS; THELODHI.COM

The Lodhi has several good restaurants; for a change of scenery go to Indian Accent, set in a small hotel. Its Indian fusion cuisine draws an international crowd. ENTREES FROM ABOUT $16; INDIANACCENT.COM



MAP: HAISAM HUSSEIN. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KEVIN DOYLE (2); SHAKTI HIMALAYA



THE FIRE WOULD BELCH OUT AN OCCASIONAL FLURRY OF *SPARKS*, WHICH THE WIND WOULD CARRY SKYWARD UNTIL THEY WERE INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE STARS.



MIRROR, MIRROR Campsite morning ablutions come with this perfectly framed reflection of Himalayan peaks. *Left:* At sunset, clouds would roll in like an unfurling bolt of white chiffon.



SUITE SENSATION The living room at a Shakti village house in Kana. Shakti leases historic rural homes from their owners.

ARRIVAL KIT

ONE WAY TO DECIDE WHERE YOU WILL GO IS TO IMAGINE ALL THAT YOU WOULD BRING.

By Leena Kim Styled by Will Kahn
Photographs by Paul Graves

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **TORY BURCH** SUNGLASSES ($195); **TOM FORD** CLUTCH ($1,390); **SAINT LAURENT BY HEDI SLIMANE** GARMENT BAG ($5,950) AND DUFFEL ($1,990); **CHOPARD** EARRINGS (PRICE ON REQUEST); **GOYARD** HANDBAG ($2,495); **GIVENCHY** EYESHADOW PALETTE IN METALLIC REFLECTION ($60); **YVES SAINT LAURENT** EYESHADOW PALETTE IN METAL CLASH ($60); **SMYTHSON** JEWELRY BOX ($2,575); **HERMES** SCARF ($395); **ROBERTO COIN** GOLD BRACELET ($7,000); **SANJAY KASLIWAL** GOLD AND DIAMOND BRACELET ($17,000); **PATEK PHILIPPE** WATCH ($51,000); **SILVIA FURMANOVICH** CORAL RING ($15,500); **TAMARA COMOLLI** GOLD RINGS (FROM $1,540); **VERDURA** BLACK JADE CUFF (PRICE ON REQUEST); **MARIE-HELENE DE TAILLAC** GOLD CUFF ($10,800); **SANJAY KASLIWAL** DIAMOND CUFF ($80,000) AND PEARL AND DIAMOND NECKLACE ($450,000); **SAINT LAURENT BY HEDI SLIMANE** TROLLEY ($3,990); **LANVIN** SANDALS ($1,085); **CHANEL** BAG ($10,500); **FENDI** TRUNK (PRICE ON REQUEST); **GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI** SANDALS ($695); **GOYARD** SUITCASE ($6,090); **CARTIER** PEN ($590); **BY KILIAN HOME** BAKHOUR REFILL BOX ($230).



BURJ AL ARAB
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The City of Gold, as Dubai is called, rose from the Persian Gulf sands in record time to become this era's greatest emblem of man's dizzying ambition and excess. No amount of gold, Swarovski, or marble (the kind used by Michelangelo) has been spared, especially not at the Burj Al Arab, the world's only (self-proclaimed) seven-star hotel. Its Royal Suite has a private cinema and rotating canopy bed, and a Rolls-Royce can take you around town, should the hotel's three aquariums, six restaurants, and impossible-to-get-into Skyview Bar not suffice. Michelin-starred chef Gary Rhodes runs Rhodes W1, an ode to British cuisine. To fulfill your *Arabian Nights* fantasy, there is Al Hadheerah, a desert restaurant that offers belly dancers, camel caravans, and Arabic meze. A round of nighttime golf on the Emirates Golf Club's Faldo course might precede a jaunt to the Cavalli Club or Armani Privé (where the decadence levels ought to be self-explanatory). If—when—you crave a break, head to Hindi Lane for silks and pashminas, or to the Jumeirah Mosque, the only mosque in Dubai open to non-Muslims. Your psyche—and wallet—will thank you.

Props styled by Marla Ulrich



BAHIA VIK
JOSE IGNACIO, URUGUAY

The Uruguayan coast bears a striking resemblance to the French Riviera these days, since it is now nearly as indispensable to many a jetsetter's holiday itinerary. It started with Punta del Este, the South American St.-Tropez, and now there is José Ignacio, a tiny fishing village where an influx, in the past few years, of high-wattage personalities has been cluttering its dirt roads with Porsches. Some credit goes to Alexander and Carrie Vik, hoteliers and art collectors who champion local contemporary artists, whose work they display at their three hotels here. Bahia Vik, in the dunes in José, is the newest, with 11 bungalows and 10 suites in the main building to take you far off the grid—but not so far that you'll miss out on the asado and the cavorting at Parador La Huella (it's the sceniest place, but the food is great) or a private boat trip to La Caracola, a beach club on Laguna Garzón. When it's time to put on shoes again, try Argentine chef Francis Mallmann's nearby El Garzón or sushi spot Namm, where you might mingle with photographer Mario Testino.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **BALENCIAGA** BAG ($2,175); **DUNHILL** PEN ($690); **RIMOWA** DELUXE MULTIWHEEL IN RED ($795); **LONGCHAMP** WHEELED SUITCASE, LARGE ($595); **BRIGGS & RILEY** CARRY-ON ($429); **RIMOWA** MULTIWHEEL SUITCASE, 53CM ($980); **DIOR HOMME** SNEAKERS ($1,050); **RIMOWA** BEAUTY CASE ($595); **LACOSTE** EAU DE LACOSTE ($70); **MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION** TOTE ($1,490); **OXYDO** SUNGLASSES ($118); **LONGCHAMP** WHEELED SUITCASE, SMALL ($440); **RIMOWA** MULTIWHEEL SUITCASE, 52CM ($980); **BOTTEGA VENETA** SANDALS ($660); **CHANEL** LE VERNIS NAIL COLOR IN VIBRATO ($27); **TOMAS MAIER** HAT ($250); **CARTIER** CLOCK ($1,100); **CELINE** SANDALS ($1,300) AND CLUTCH ($560); **LONGCHAMP** WHEELED SUITCASE, MEDIUM ($550).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **RALPH LAUREN** BAG ($5,950); **OSCAR DE LA RENTA** SANDALS ($590); **GHURKA** 70 SUITCASE ($8,250) AND 90 SUITCASE ($9,250); **ALTUZARRA** BAG ($2,995); **JOHN HARDY** SHELL RINGS (FROM $6,000); VINTAGE SALT AND PEPPER SHAKERS ($13); **GHURKA** 60 SUITCASE ($7,750); **KARA ROSS** CITRINE NECKLACE ($19,500); **ESCADA SPORT** BIKINI ($325); **STUART WEITZMAN** SHOES ($425); **BERLUTI** LOAFERS ($2,300); **GHURKA** 40 ATTACHÉ ($4,950); **PRADA** BACKPACK ($1,190); **GHURKA** BEAUTY CASE ($5,000); **HUBLOT** WATCH ($42,900); **BALLY** BAG ($2,995); **MYKITA** SUNGLASSES ($472); **GUCCI** SUNGLASSES ($395); VINTAGE SHIRT ($125).

HOTEL WAILEA
MAUI, HAWAII

"Remote from the work-day world and its frets and worries, a bloomy, fragrant paradise," wrote Mark Twain, circa 1884, of this faraway land, an everlasting fixture in our imaginations, with all of its promise: black sand, hot volcanoes, exotic beauties in shimmering grass skirts. The travel agents at Pure Maui will make all your kitsch dreams a reality. Or ask for Matt Damon's itinerary (he was a client). At the adults-only Hotel Wailea, you can kiteboard, canoe, do yoga, or partake in an island beach safari before unwinding in the soon-to-open tree house spa, set among mango and avocado orchards. The farm-to-table fare at the hotel's Mediterranean restaurant, Capische, is some of Maui's finest. Ahi poke cravings can be sated at Humuhumunukunukuapua'a, named after the state fish, or at the beachfront Mama's Fish House, where the daily catch is so fresh you won't doubt it came straight from the ocean you're looking at. And what's Hawaii without a tee time? Make like the pros and shoot a round over the ocean (literally) at Kapalua Resort.


Aloha
Hawaii



HOTEL NACIONAL
HAVANA, CUBA

Woe be to the souls who fall behind in the race to Cuba, missing many a steamy night in Havana, cruising around in a vintage car, drinking daiquiris as Ernest Hemingway did at El Floridita, and dancing until dawn at Turquino. Towering above this vitality is the Hotel Nacional, like a regal guardian looking out to the sea. Pick the suite named after your favorite entertainer—Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Rita Hayworth—at this 85-year-old institution, which offers live music every night. But in Havana, music plays and bodies dance in every corner—and to every beat—from the infamous Tropicana Club (cabaret) to Café de Paris (traditional Cuban) to the Cuban National Ballet. Dining should be done in *paladares* (private restaurants, some run by families in their homes), such as Café Laurent, La Guarida, and Le Chansonnier. Visit Finca Vigía, Hemingway's home turned museum, and see where *The Old Man and the Sea* was written. History continues in Old Havana, where the architecture will show you why they call this the City of Columns.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **PAUL ANDREW** FLATS ($545); **ETRO** HAT ($648); **STEAMLINE** CARRY-ON IN PINK AND ORANGE ($600); **GUCCI** FLORAL BAG ($2,700); **BOSS** BAG ($1,495); **MARK DAVIS** BAKELITE BANGLES (FROM $2,800); **VIONNET** PINK TROLLEY (PRICE ON REQUEST); **VERDURA** NECKLACE ($11,000); **VALENTINO GARAVANI** TWO-TONE BAG ($2,375); **TONY DUQUETTE** AQUAMARINE ($35,000) AND CHRYSOPRASE AND RUBY ($54,000) RINGS. **STEAMLINE** VANITY CASE ($310) AND STOWAWAY ($615); **FENDI** SUNGLASSES ($470); **STEAMLINE** VANITY CASE IN PINK ($310); **SOPHIE HULME** TOTE BAG ($2,795); **TABITHA SIMMONS** SHOES ($695); **STEAMLINE** STOWAWAY ($615); **CHANEL** JACKET ($9,200) AND BAG ($4,300). FOR DETAILS SEE PAGE 120.

OLD FAITHFUL
The courtyard of the Sultan Ahmed Mosque, also known as the Blue Mosque.



A PLACE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS



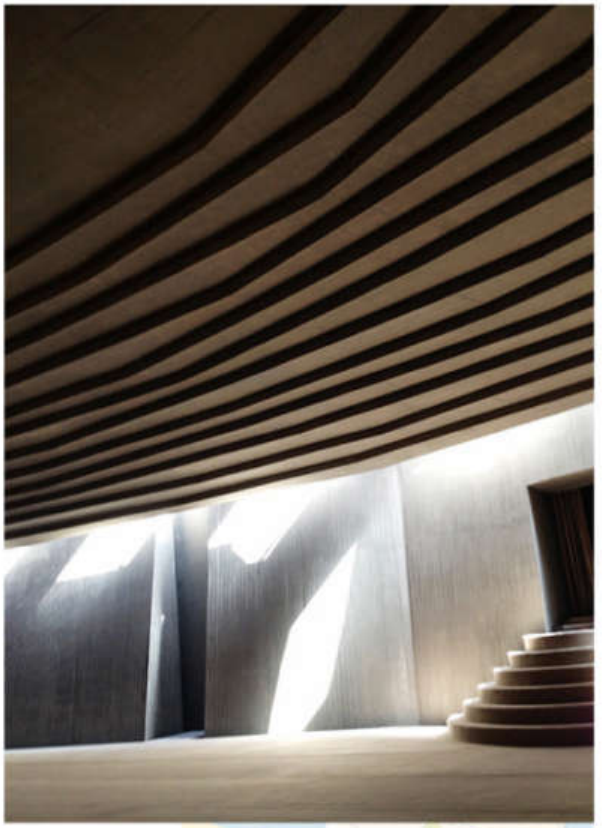
NEW WAVE
A site-specific installation at the gallery Arter.

By Mary Kaye Schilling Photographs by Maria Ziegelböck

ISTANBUL, BUILT BY *EMPERORS* AND *SULTANS*, IS BEING REIMAGINED BY 21ST-CENTURY *VISIONARIES*, WHO ARE BLENDING CONTEMPORARY LUXE WITH THE CITY'S *ANCIENT ALLURE*.

Among the many talents of Mehmet II—poet, architect, conqueror of civilizations—was the ability to identify a great piece of real estate. Upon arriving in Constantinople in 1453, the future sultan said (and I paraphrase), "We are not going to find a better spot than this." He was barely 21 years old, but no slacker; in record time he brought more than 1,000 years of Byzantine rule to an end and established the Ottoman Empire, on the seven hills of what would become Istanbul.

There is, to be sure, a lot more city, if markedly less empire, these days. Still, standing on the upper terrace of Mehmet II's palace, Topkapi, I'm reminded of the rather more poetic reaction of another bewitched visitor, 18th-century French writer Alphonse de Lamartine: "If one had but a single glance to give the world, one should gaze on Istanbul." But what glance to choose? The one directly in front of me, of the silvery strait of the Bosphorus, which divides the European and Asian sides of the city like a knife cutting through a molten wedding cake? Or the one to my left, of the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus estuary once crossed by a 15th-century tightrope walker, in honor of the circumcision of Sultan Ahmet III's son? Gaze too long and the land and water seem to merge, the houses spilling down the city's slopes to dance on the waves.



MODERN LINES Architect Emre Arolat's Sancaklar Mosque, finished in 2015, redefines Islamic architectural traditions.



What took me so long to get here? Despite five trips to neighboring Greece, I had, if not actively resisted Turkey, remained curiously oblivious to it, my impression shaped partly, I must admit, by the depressed and brutal Istanbul of the 1978 film *Midnight Express*, perhaps the worst thing to happen to Turkey since World War II. (I joke, but merely mentioning the film can turn Istanbullus ashen, so negative was its effect on tourism and the general perception of the city.) All of which seems absurd now.

Most of Turkey is Muslim, some parts more devout than others, but don't expect Islamic propriety in Istanbul. Even though the country is currently governed by the conservative AKP party (which lost some ground in a recent election), the city remains a place of cultural broad-mindedness, with the ability to embrace both religious conviction and moral license. There may be 3,200 mosques here, but there are also 40,000 bars. It has a nervy sophistication reminiscent of New York's, though such comparisons are lazy. The city, familiar and foreign at once, resists categorization and, more than any other, thrives on its opposites: ancient and modern, chaotic and serene, enigmatic and open.

It is a cliché that Istanbul is the oldest city combining two continents. Still, the pull between East and West does sit at the heart of its singularity, a place between two worlds. Some streets feel like Paris, others the Middle East. "We can't say we are Asian or European," my guide, Abdullah ("Apo") Yenice, will tell me. "We are not black or white, we are gray. It's the richness of Turkey."

Antony Doucet, of Istanbul's innovative House Hotel Collection, moved here from Paris in 2008 because of that "perfect blend of Occidental and Oriental." But he also fell in love with the people. "Turkish hospitality is not a legend, it's a lifestyle. France is very beautiful, but the people can be…" He smiles pointedly.

"In the old days a guest was considered a gift from God," says American expat Earl Starkey, co-owner of luxury travel agency Sophisticated Travel, "and foreigners remain very special here." According to Starkey, what Turks fear most is being alone. "The more people, the better they like it."

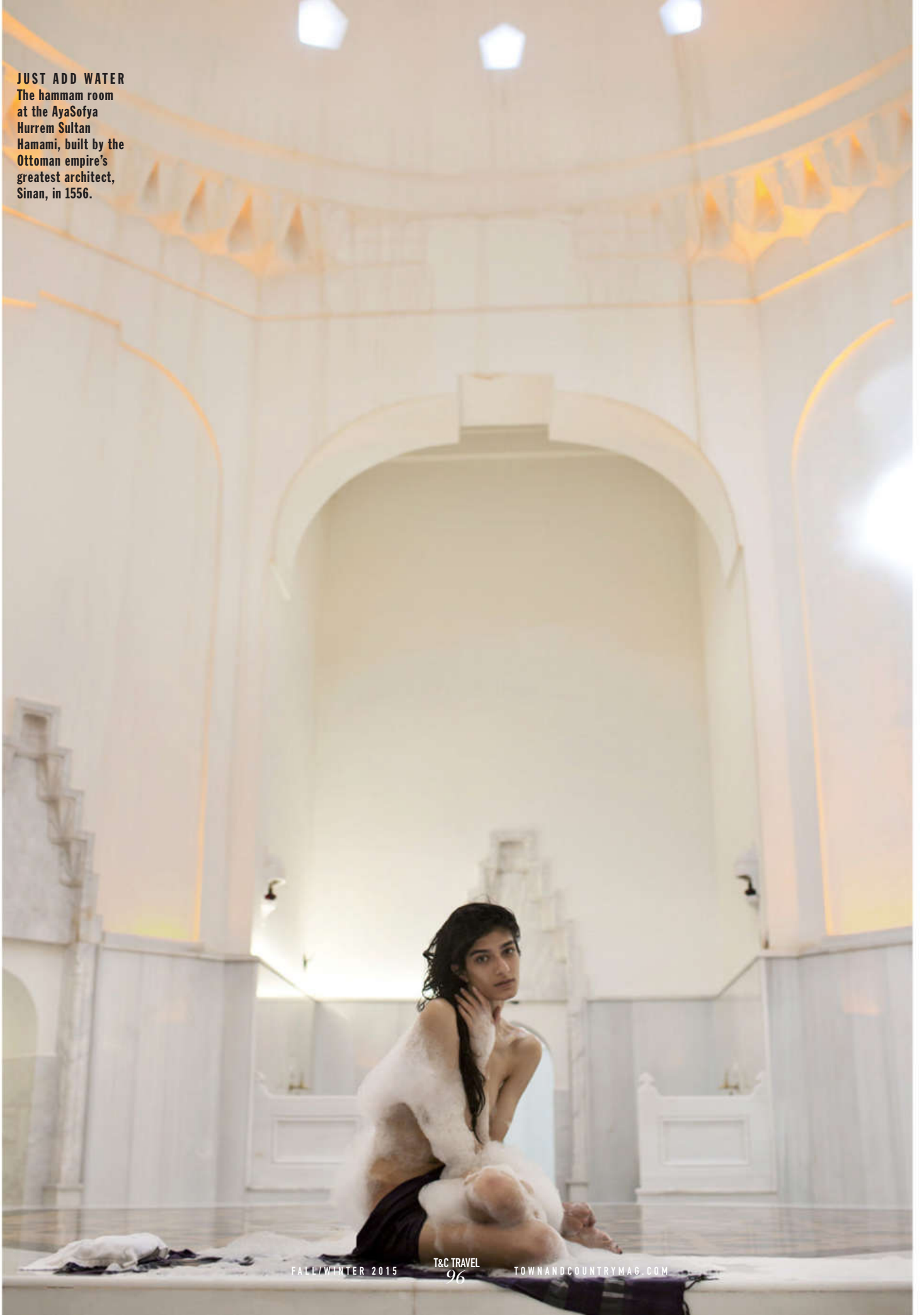
The good news for Istanbullus, then, is that the population is roughly 17 million (for some perspective, that's more people than in all of Greece). Fifty percent are under the age of 30, so it also means this city is in the process of reinventing itself yet again. The remains of glorious past civilizations are everywhere visible, and it's easy to be seduced by the intricate web of cultural influences—Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Armenian, Ottoman—which were more pronounced before Ataturk, the republic's founder, turned his country, seemingly in the blink of an eye, into a secularized, Westernized nation-state in 1923. But modern Istanbul has its own tempting vigor, which is nourished by its past.

The place is huge, with the sprawl of Los Angeles, but most visitors stay on the European side, which is so densely packed there's nowhere to build but up. And up it goes. A construction boom, combined with ancient, serpentine streets, can mean traffic nightmares. Trips that should take 15 minutes often use up an hour or more. Further confounding for first-timers are districts filled with a mind-boggling network of neighborhoods, many of them difficult to pronounce. The Turkish language has its roots, like the Ottomans themselves, in nomadic Central Asia. As a result it has more in common with Japanese or Finnish than with Greek or Arabic. Even "thank you"—*tesekkur ederim*—is a challenge to utter properly. (Turkish uses a variety of accent marks that could not be reproduced here, as they don't exist in the magazine's font.)

MAP: HAISAM HUSSEIN

HEADS UP
A hawker along the Golden Horn peddles simit, a sesame bread that is a Turkish cuisine staple. Street food is everywhere in Istanbul.





JUST ADD WATER
The hammam room at the AyaSofya Hurrem Sultan Hamami, built by the Ottoman empire's greatest architect, Sinan, in 1556.



EAT PRAY LOVE
Dessert and Turkish coffee at Meze by Lemon Tree. *Above:* A view of the New Mosque and, behind it, the city's biggest mosque, the Suleymaniye.



SOUL FOOD
A cook carries stuffed artichokes at Ciya, a favorite with global foodies.



WESTERN UNION
The ballroom at Istanbul's first grand hotel, the Pera Palace, built for passengers from the Orient Express.

For these reasons it's advisable to build your days around specific areas and to employ a private guide and driver—not only to navigate the city but to speed you past the lines outside top tourist destinations. And there are many not covered here, like the Chora Museum, with its Byzantine mosaic masterpieces. Think of this as a five-day sampler—a meze platter, if you will.

For simplicity's sake, we have broken Istanbul up into four bite-size pieces, according to districts rather than neighborhoods (see the map on page 94), and with suggested itineraries that allow you to travel in the sanest manner possible. Depending on your interests, you will likely want to give some areas more than a day. The one constant, regardless of where you are: In a city with an embarrassment of vista riches, it's always about the view.

EMINONU: *Remembrance of Things Past*

"Saying you are Turkish is the same as saying you are American," Apo is telling me. "There are so many mixtures of people here." In any given century you could hear Greek, Armenian, Hebrew, and French spoken on the streets. Churches sit by mosques sit by synagogues. Istanbul has always been a magnet for opportunists, expats, refugees, and migrants; it is also the only place to have been the center of Orthodox Christianity and global Islam.

Don't take my word for it. Cross over the Galata Bridge and that history is laid out before you. European Istanbul has two sides—the historic and the more modern—divided by the Golden Horn. The city's fabled horizon of minarets and domes has been preserved (thanks to strict building laws) in Eminonu, where ruins dating back to before Christ nearly litter the cobbled streets. There's a timeless vibrancy here, with hawkers peddling the same foods they have for centuries: grilled corn, mussels, the ubiquitous donut-shaped sesame bread called simit.

This is where you'll find the "light of the three beauties": **Hagia Sophia**, the sixth-century Byzantine basilica that became the blueprint for the greatest Ottoman mosques; **Topkapi Palace**, splendiferous home to 26 sultans; and the **Blue Mosque**, a building so full of grace that from afar it can seem painted on the sky. That these edifices have survived despite dozens of earthquakes (one every few years) is a testament to engineering—and, I suppose, slave labor.

The Blue Mosque (the Sultan Ahmed Mosque, to Turks) has a staggering 21,000 blue and green patterned quartz tiles adorning the lower walls. Made by Iznik masters and coated with an unusually transparent glaze, they shimmer with light, the walls and seven domes appearing to breathe in and out. But the size of the Blue Mosque and the crowds it draws (as many as 25,000 people a day) keep the tiles' beauty at a distance. Apo takes me to the more intimate **Rustempasha Mosque**, built in just two years (1561 to 1563) by Mimar Sinan, the Gaudí of the Ottoman Empire and the architect of Istanbul's biggest mosque, the **Suleymaniye**, which sits at the top of Eminonu's highest hill. "To many, Rustempasha is more deserving of the name 'blue,'" Apo says. In fact, some say it was the inspiration for the Blue Mosque (built by Sinan's apprentice in 1609). "In terms of Islamic art, Rustempasha has greater importance, because the quality of Iznik tile is higher throughout. So, while it is a mosque where people still worship, it is also a museum."

There is a lightness to religion here that I haven't experienced in other Muslim countries. "For one thing, we are not Arab," Apo says. "Islam here and in, say, Afghanistan, is two different religions. We also live, thanks to Ataturk, in a place where how you practice faith is between you and God."

Underground, between Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, sits, to my mind, the old city's unintended high point. The Emperor Justinian, builder of Hagia Sophia (a modest man, he proclaimed upon its completion, "Solomon, I have outdone thee"), was also responsible for the **Roman Cistern**. Created in 523 to store water for Justinian's palace, and therefore never meant to be seen, it was buried for centuries before being rediscovered in 1545 (which made it possible for James Bond to paddle through it in *From Russia with Love*). Partly it's the cistern's dramatically dim lighting, partly the hundreds of ghostly carp that purify the few remaining feet of water, but there's an otherworldly thrill to navigating the mismatched columns, salvaged from ruined Greek temples in an archaic form of recycling. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 116]

TWO DAYS IN CAPPADOCIA

A SIDE OF BLISS

The sobriquet Land of Enchantment has been taken by New Mexico, but perhaps it can share: **Cappadocia**, just one hour by plane from Istanbul, offers a similar feeling of supernatural serenity, as well as a link to ancient civilizations through an impressive network of cave dwellings. There is much to see in Cappadocia, which was once an important stop on the Silk Road. But for a two-day trip, stick to the jaw-dropping: the **Zelve Open Air Museum**, with its Flintstones-style cave houses (*above*) carved into the area's not-so-slowly eroding limestone cliffs; the "fairy chimneys," whimsical volcanic rock formations sculpted by wind and rain; the **Goreme Open Air Museum**, with its 10th-century churches cut out of the rock (complete with Byzantine frescoes); and **Derinkuyu**, an astonishing underground complex—a virtual city with multiple levels—inhabited by Christians fleeing first Romans, then Muslims. On the morning of your second day, assuming the weather permits and you don't suffer from acrophobia, treat yourself to a dawn balloon ride. Flying over this geological wonderworld, so close at times you can almost touch the rocks, is a soul-tickling experience.





WHERE TO STAY: Cappadocia is famous for its cave hotels, a decidedly more luxurious experience now than for the Byzantines. I particularly loved the just-opened **Hotel Cappadocia**, in the town of Ortahisar, a high-end boutique that offers an immersive local experience; a topflight restaurant, Fresko, that has a view of Mount Erciyes; and a cave hammam (FROM $120, THEHOUSEHOTEL.COM). The **Sacred House Hotel**, in Urgup, is opulence at its most idiosyncratic; think Lenny Kravitz if he were an Ottoman sultan. The 21 rooms each have a theme, like the Sorcerer (*left*), which includes a bathtub carved from a meteorite. The basement hammam, Inferno, has a full bar. Worth it for the Instagram photos alone (FROM $240, SACREDHOUSE.COM.TR).



MARY KAYE SCHILLING (3)

ADVANCE RESERVATE

A SOON-TO-BE-REVEALED MAKEOVER OF *THE RITZ PARIS* HAS HABITUES PREPARED FOR *HEARTBREAK*. CAN ITS STORIED ECCENTRICITIES SURVIVE, OR WILL THE SOUL OF THE WORLD'S MOST BELOVED GRAND HOTEL BE *SACRIFICED* ON THE ALTAR OF MODERN LUXURY?

PUTTIN' UP THE RITZ
From left: The Place Vendôme, in 1951, with the hotel behind the Colonne Vendôme; construction of the underground tunnel between the hotel and the new parking facility under the Place Vendôme.



FROM FAR LEFT: © MUSEE CARNAVALET/ROGER-VIOLLET/THE IMAGE WORKS; JULIEN PIGNOL/RITZ PARIS; PIERRE CLEFS/REX/AREDOA

IONS



By Michael Wolff

Not long after the Ritz Paris closed its doors for renovation in 2011, I was introduced to a young woman at a cocktail party in New York, whose last name, Despont, gave me a sudden start.

"Thierry Despont, the architect?" I said, and challenged: "Are you related?"

"My father," she said brightly and innocently.

"Tell him," I snarled, "that if he ruins the Ritz I will hunt him down."

There are so many things wrong with this behavior. Attacking a man's offspring for the way he does his job. Being this passionate—off-kilter, really—about a hotel. A hotel! Indeed, identifying so personally with luxury real estate in this leveled day and age. ➳

VIEW MASTER
British pilots Amy Johnson and Jim Mollison, in a room at the Ritz, circa 1932.





IN AND OUT
From left: The hotel's interior, in 2008 and 1920.



DESIGN FOR LIVING
The renovation of the Salon César, as of January this year. *Left:* The Imperial Suite, before the renovation.

FROM TOP: AUSTRIAN ARCHIVES/IMAGNO/GETTY IMAGES; JULIEN PITOLLET/2; PARIS; HUGHES HERVÉ/ZUMA PRESS; NEWSCOM







TOP, FROM LEFT: DOROTHEA SCHMID/LAIF/REDUX; H. C. ELLIS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

And yet I have had moments at the Ritz, precious and costly ones, in which the experience, sublime and transporting, has risen—perhaps I should be ashamed to say—to that of what you might feel in the presence of the highest art. Hence, the renovator's responsibility ought to be, it seemed to me, on par with that of a restorer of a great painting.

The Ritz, which sits a block from the Tuileries, on the Place Vendôme—created to commemorate the glories of the armies of Louis XIV—is now shuttered behind a plywood façade. So too is the landmark that sits across from the hotel, the Colonne Vendôme (erected by Napoleon, torn down by the Paris Commune, then re-erected three years later). Despont is responsible for the renovation of both and has so far missed several deadlines since commencing in 2011; the hotel is now tentatively scheduled to reopen in December. The many delays rivaled those during the turbulent renovation of the Picasso Museum, which dragged on for five years; they are certainly producing a similar level of anxiety among its loyal habitués.

The Ritz is, arguably, a more important cultural institution than the Picasso Museum. One of many grand or palace hotels built across Europe at the turn of the last century as marvels of new money, a new class mobility, and revolutionary technology (plumbing! heating! elevators!), the Ritz became a formative setting for some of the high and low points of 20th-century Paris.

Not long after it was opened, by César Ritz, in 1898, Marcel Proust took up residence in the hotel, helping to make it a major outpost for a modern sensibility: theater people, writers, avant-garde artists, and filmmakers. Coco Chanel lived there, surrounded by a circle that included Sergei Diaghilev and Jean Cocteau. F. Scott Fitzgerald found a great metaphor for his story "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz." Joe Kennedy seduced Clare Boothe Luce (or vice versa) in one of its rooms. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor, along with other exiled European royalty, settled at the hotel, as did Hitler's number two, Hermann Göring, who took an entire floor for himself during the war. Plans for Hitler's assassination were hatched at the Ritz. (*The Hotel on Place Vendôme*, by Tilar J. Mazzeo, published in 2013, about wartime Paris, is an edge-of-your-seat account of the hotel's changing loyalties.) Moments apart, photographer Robert Capa and Ernest Hemingway "liberated" the Ritz in 1945—and the latter, who had sex with Marlene Dietrich (among others) there, remains a kitschy presence at the hotel, including in his namesake bar. Diana, the former princess of Wales, had her last

dinner and assignation there, in 1997, before trying to outrun the paparazzi and dying in a Paris tunnel.

The Ritz, of course, is not a protected piece of history. It is owned by Mohamed Al Fayed, the father of Dodi Fayed, Diana's ill-fated beau, and his brother Ali. It may be an effective museum of sensibility and culture, but it exists, in the end, solely to make a buck. The Picasso Museum is answerable to many committees and monitors; the Ritz is answerable only to efficiency and the market, and to its owners' whims and tastes.

Still, there may be no more endangered and vulnerable architectural style and cultural monument than the turn-of-the-century grand hotel, not least of all because the type of person ordinarily interested in cultural preservation—the liberal, the bookish, the academic—cannot afford one. (There are, however, people like me who splurge guiltily and helplessly.)

Rich men such as the Al Fayed brothers are often attracted to owning great hotels because they are drawn to real estate and lineage. Conrad Hilton bought the grand palace hotel he was obsessed with, the Waldorf Astoria, in 1949, and last October Hilton Worldwide Holdings sold it to a Chinese insurance company for a near-record $1.95 billion; Donald Trump bought the Plaza in New York, which was eventually sold to an Israeli syndicate of billionaires, followed by an Indian syndicate of billionaires; the Blackstone Group, controlled by billionaire Stephen Schwarzman, bought Claridge's in London only to sell it to two Irish tycoons—who were shortly edged out by British billionaires the Barclay brothers, who own the Ritz in London (also opened by César Ritz, and subsequently denuded in a lengthy renovation started in 1995); the Sultan of Brunei, the richest of them all, has a group of hotel properties that includes the Beverly Hills Hotel and Hotel Bel-Air. (Activists have protested the Sultan's antigay stance but not his character-stealing renovation of the Bel-Air.) Such men seem curiously compelled to own what they often destroy and nearly always negatively tamper with.



X FACTOR Architect Thierry Despont. *Left, from top:* The Grand Staircase in 1948 and protected during the restoration.

THE RITZ IS NO LONGER FOR THE ONE PERCENT. IT IS *NOT EVEN FOR THE .001 PERCENT*. IT IS FOR THE *ARISTOCRACY* OF THE .001 PERCENT.

A great hotel, as opposed to a merely efficient one, is the product of its own story. (Boutique hotels, neither great nor efficient, often try to pretend they have a story.) It is perhaps one reason why writers are attracted to these establishments (indeed, why there are whole genres of fiction and movies set around them). The story creates the hotel—from as low down as the many louche tales from New York's Chelsea Hotel to as high as those from the Ritz. Out of those stories come a culture, a look and feel, a set of traditions and rituals, as well as a layering of details—from paintings and antiques to cups and saucers and silver patterns. Billy Wilder memorably celebrated the typeface used in the Ritz Paris's hallways in 1957's *Love in the Afternoon*, which was filmed at the hotel and starred Gary Cooper and Audrey Hepburn. The details are often cherished precisely for their eccentricity and inefficiency—the Claridge's many sinks, for instance, that still run parallel hot and cold water, can defy a renovator's logic. (Once, in a particularly misguided Claridge's refurbishment, a range of such details—faucets, cutlery, silver pastry stands—were disposed of, only, in a successive refurbishment, to be missed, prompting the commission of inferior copies.)

At the Ritz Paris, shortly before the 2011 renovation got underway, the art consultant Joseph Friedman was called in by the hotel's management to help with an audit of its many paintings, which it acquired, often haphazardly, over the past century. In the Coco Chanel suite—perhaps the single most famous in the world—Friedman was brought up short by a painting on a side wall. It was, he recognized, a work by the 17th-century French master Charles Le Brun, court painter to the Sun King, Louis XIV. *The Sacrifice of Polyxena* was promptly sold at auction to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art for $1.9 million.

How much lesser is the Ritz without it?

To be sure, the job of an expensive hotel is to offer, along with its storied past, luxury. In 2015 that involves a level of high-tech improvement and brand name product placement, as well as state-of-the-art TLC and efficiency that are bound to be at odds with their 1898 equivalents. (The Ritz opened that year with one state-of-the-art luxury: a widely trumpeted bathroom per room.)

But there is superannuated luxury and then there is, in that most fearful of real estate words, "contemporary" luxury, a kind of seamless white noise of undifferentiated perfection that, depending on sumptuousness of fabric and multiplicity of bathroom features, commands a higher premium in the global hospitality market. Many of Paris's luxury hotels—the Hôtel de Crillon, the Plaza Athénée, Le Meurice, the Four Seasons Hotel George V—have undergone recent top-to-bottom renovations, each in its own way losing a piece of its character and history. On the other hand, all now clearly function at a higher level of efficiency and ritziness than the Ritz. (Paris is one of the world's most expensive hotel cities, with the average per night of top luxury rooms now a mind-boggling $1,250.)

That is, then, the philosophical rub and a renovator's dilemma: What is more valuable, the unique and irreplaceable or the flawless and ordered?

Complicating this, all renovators now seem to believe that they

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: CAMERA PRESS/CIRCE HAMILTON/REDUX; JULIEN PIGNOL/RITZ PARIS; KEYSTONE-FRANCE/GAMMA-KEYSTONE/GETTY IMAGES

are protecting traditions. A hotel's brand is too important; hence, everybody is its theoretical steward. The renovator is now likely to be the opposite of the ruthless destroyer; he or she is the person who just wants to keep everyone happy.

Christian Boyens, for instance, the executive leading the Ritz's estimated $300 million renovation, knows the worth of the Ritz brand down to the last euro and is deeply invested in growing that value—brand is the name of the luxury game. Boyens—a young, handsome man of indeterminate European background—was educated at Cornell's School of Hotel Management and has worked more than 10 years at U.S. hotels, including the Peninsula in Beverly Hills. He seemed delighted to discuss the renovation.

Certainly his slide show and renderings indicate a careful and intelligent approach to a set of knotty tactical issues. For one thing, the Ritz has a forbidding long interior corridor, with a sense of banishment for those consigned to the back of the hotel. (This corridor is also famous for its many merchant vitrines with strange artifacts and fashions that one might be hard-pressed to imagine anyone ever wanting to buy.) For another, it has a raised reception area that can make you feel as though you've been sent to the headmaster for a reprimand. All of this is to be reconfigured—better configured, he assures. Surely it will be slicker, cleaner, more orderly, logical, and elegant. But better?

"When you renovate a grand hotel you can mess it up, like maybe at the Plaza in New York," Boyens says. But he defends the process, too. "I think I understand what they tried to do, for instance, at the Bel-Air in Los Angeles. I don't think it is as bad as everybody made it. Sure, if you expect Nancy Reagan to eat her half of a Cobb salad with Betsy Bloomingdale, well, it's over."

Boyens wants to make the case for change and improvement. "The Ritz has been open nonstop for 114 years. It's only the second owner right now," he says. "From 1898 to 1979 it was the Ritz family. And 1979 to 2015 it is the Al Fayed family. In 1979 what Mr. Al Fayed did was invest large sums of money to bring the hotel back to its glory days. He created, for instance, the swimming pool. Don't forget this was 30 years before this whole spa craze was coming out. So our owner had a vision there."

Indeed, the Ritz pool, somewhat blasphemous when it was installed, is now a favorite salubrious setting for not just Ritz guests but the many Parisians and international billionaires who buy special access.

I ask the question I am rather dreading the answer to: "Are there any renovations of this magnitude, with this much at stake, that you admire?"

"The Connaught," he says, putting a dagger in my heart.

The Connaught was a beloved, somewhat eccentric Mayfair hotel with an Edwardian flavor, around the corner from its sister hotel, Claridge's (both part of the Maybourne Hotel Group). While Claridge's—aided by its great bones and the frequent remonstrations of the royal family—has so far been able to largely shrug off periodic renovations, the smaller Connaught, in 2007, was subjected to a spare-no-expense makeover that turned it into a top-flight international hotel hardly distinguishable, at least in its new wing, from other international hotels (the charms of English plumbing giving way to deodorizing and drying Japanese toilets).

The real issue, Boyens says, perhaps sensing my disappointment, was what you don't see: the internal structure, the underbelly of pipes and wires and elevators and air conditioning—and now WiFi! All of this needed to be upgraded [CONTINUED ON PAGE 115]

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: THAI TOUTAIN; OWEN FRANKEN/SPRING RESTAURANT, PARIS; JOERG LEHMANN; THOMAS DUVEL

RESTAURANTS

FORTUNATELY, SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE.

I am not a cook or a chef or a critic. What I am, for better or worse, is a picky New Yorker who often has limited time in Paris. Which is why, 20 years ago, I began compiling a list of restaurants that always fulfill my (and perhaps your) foodie fantasies: superb cuisine, great service, and the sort of ambience that makes you *feel* the city. *Janet Nezhad Band, nonprofit fundraiser*



MICHELIN MEN

Taillevent (15 RUE LAMENNAIS, 8TH ARR.) Haute cuisine perfectly served should make Taillevent a slam-dunk for three Michelin stars—and yet it currently holds only two. The staff not only foresee your every fancy; they seem to delight in tickling it. Order the tasting menu and prepare to be transported. TAILLEVENT.COM

Restaurant Guy Savoy (11 QUAI DE CONTI, 6TH ARR.) Chef Savoy and his hospitable team have three well-deserved stars. I go for the iconic artichoke and black truffle soup, the Bresse chicken breast and foie gras terrine, and the beef two ways. Just save room: The dessert cart is the stuff of childhood fantasies. GUYSAVOY.COM

THE TRADITIONALISTS



Astier (44 RUE JEAN-PIERRE TIMBAUD, 11TH ARR.) You'll find a mix of locals and travelers in this unpretentious bistro that serves classics like harengs fumés and gigot d'agneau rôti. But let's not be coy: It's a favorite because of the excellent communal cheese platter, one of the few places still offering this treat. RESTAURANT-ASTIER.COM

Chez Georges (1 RUE DU MAIL, 2ND ARR.) This classic Paris bistro—leather banquettes, crisp white tablecloths, and a stylish buzz—is in a league of its own when it comes to traditional savoir faire. I never miss it, no matter how short my trip. 011-33-1-42-60-07-11

Chez L'Ami Jean (27 RUE MALAR, 7TH ARR.) Rustic Basque bistro—nothing fussy here—with generous portions and a lively atmosphere. But you know why you've really come: the best rice pudding you will *ever* taste. LAMIJEAN.FR

THE INNOVATORS

Frenchie (5 RUE DU NIL, 2ND ARR.) Charming chef Gregory Marchand turns simple, quality ingredients into something entirely modern and surprising, as in his foie gras with fig chutney and chanterelles. The place is tiny, so reservations can be challenging. Might want to start right now. FRENCHIE-RESTAURANT.COM



David Toutain (29 RUE SURCOUF, 7TH ARR.) Much has been written about Toutain's *amuse* of salsify with parsnip and white chocolate cream. Deservedly so: His formidable experience (L'Arpège, Mugaritz, Agapé Substance) reveals itself in consummate technique and courageous combinations. DAVIDTOUTAIN.COM

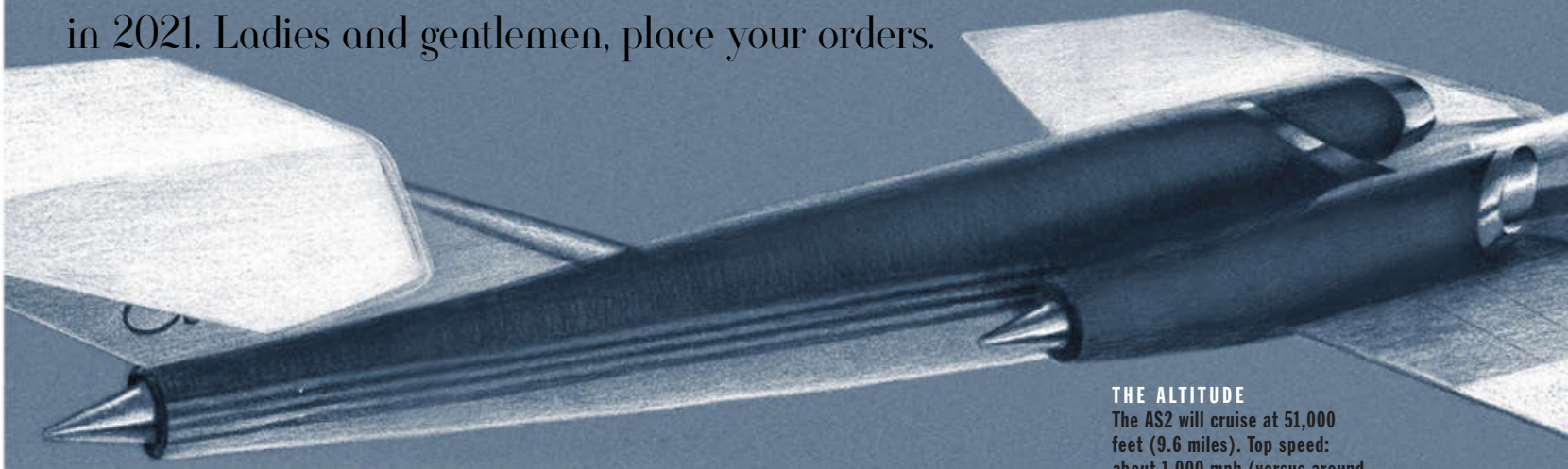
Pierre Sang (55 RUE OBERKAMPF, 11TH ARR.) Culinary theater from *Top Chef France* star Pierre Sang Boyer. There are no decisions—just join the party and revel in the bold flavors of the French-Asian tasting menu, an insanely good value at 39 euros for dinner. No reservations. PIERRESANG BOYER.COM



Spring (6 RUE BAILLEUL, 1ST ARR.) Inventive, sophisticated French cuisine. All guests enjoy the same meal prepared in an open kitchen by (American) chef Daniel Rose and his convivial staff. Book early—online only! SPRINGPARIS.FR

HEAVENLY BODY

Not since the Concorde's 2003 demise has there been a supersonic passenger plane—or a flying machine as sexy as the Aerion AS2, which comes your way in 2021. Ladies and gentlemen, place your orders.

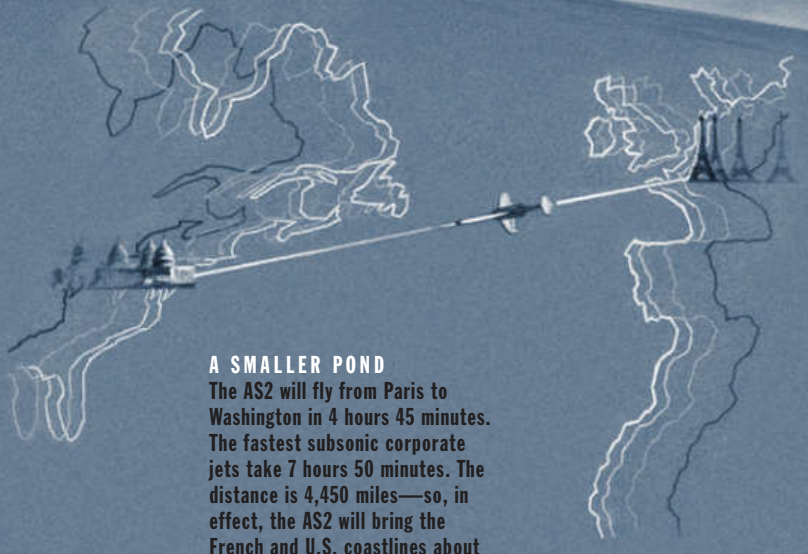


THE ALTITUDE
The AS2 will cruise at 51,000 feet (9.6 miles). Top speed: about 1,000 mph (versus around 610 mph for one of the fastest subsonic corporate jets, the Gulfstream G650 ER).

By Clive Irving
Illustrations by Andreas Leitner

The rich, as F. Scott Fitzgerald is alleged to have said to Ernest Hemingway, are different from you and me. Today Hemingway might have replied, "Yes. They fly their own jets." The United States, not entirely surprisingly, has the largest fleet of private jets in the world—more than 12,000 of them continually crisscrossing the globe. But at the moment, in terms of speed of travel, everyone is still created equal. All jets, commercial or private, hit a wall at around 650 mph, the limit of subsonic flight. To go beyond the speed of sound requires far more engine power and involves far more challenging aerodynamics. There hasn't been a supersonic jet (other than military) since the ill-fated Concorde. But that is about to change.

Meet the Aerion AS2, bound to become the ne plus ultra of executive voyaging. A rare example of U.S. and European interests pooling their talent (and money), it is being developed in Reno, Nevada, by the Aerion Corp., which is working with European-based Airbus. The eye-popping price will separate those with really deep pockets from the rest: $120 million, twice the cost of the most expensive subsonic corporate jet. But owners get to join what you could call the Nine-Mile-High Club, with the many assets revealed here.



A SMALLER POND
The AS2 will fly from Paris to Washington in 4 hours 45 minutes. The fastest subsonic corporate jets take 7 hours 50 minutes. The distance is 4,450 miles—so, in effect, the AS2 will bring the French and U.S. coastlines about 40 percent closer.



A BEAUTIFUL MEMORY
The Anglo-French Concorde was the first and only successful supersonic airliner (a Russian copy flopped) and could carry 100 passengers. It had one cruise speed—more than 1,300 mph—which enabled it to fly from New York to London in three and a half hours. But a supersonic jet of that size or bigger is no longer viable; it would guzzle too much fuel and blight the environment. In contrast, a corporate supersonic jet like the AS2—smaller, with cleaner engines and able to fly subsonically as well, can be both fast and virtuous.

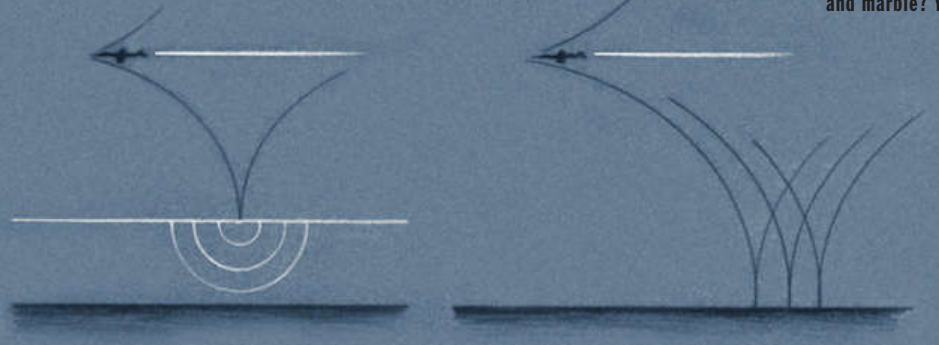
THE ENGINES
There are three of them, and they have to provide the punch for supersonic flight while meeting new, stricter noise limits for takeoff. Placing them behind the cabin greatly diminishes the noise for passengers.

THE NOSE
Its shape—long and tapering to a point—makes the AS2 very "slippery" at high speed, an effect aided by the position of the wings, set far back.

THE CABIN AIR
The higher a plane flies, the dryer the air feels, but not so in the AS2. Because its small cabin is simpler to pressurize than one holding hundreds of passengers, the air—despite the plane's cruising height—will feel like air at 4,000 feet, versus the 8,000 feet of airliners.

THE WINGS
Their unusual thinness—thinner than a Boeing 747's—and smooth tips like blades create what is called a laminar flow, which generates far less aerodynamic drag at both subsonic and supersonic speeds.

THE CABIN DESIGN
The interior's look and feel can be customized to suit a variety of needs (or tastes), from a comfortable 12-seater to a lavish penthouse in the sky. Fancy some polished wood and marble? You got it.



BEATING THE BOOM
People living under the flight path of supersonic jets suffer a nuisance called sonic boom, which sounds like an artillery barrage. It's created by shock waves that fan outward and downward from the nose of the airplane like bow waves from a boat. The AS2 can fly over land at a lower supersonic speed, 800 mph, without creating a boom. Its shock wave (*above left*) dissipates before hitting the ground. With the AS2 at top speed, around 1,000 mph, flying over water (*above right*), the boom would be audible at sea level. In places where nonmilitary supersonic flight is banned over land, as in the U.S., the AS2 could fly subsonic.

CHOOSE YOUR MODEL
Personal jets come in many sizes and prices. Here, our top picks:



A Boeing 747-8, fitted out to order: $300 million



The AS2: $120 million



The Gulfstream 650 ER: $66.5 million



The Dassault Falcon 8X: $58 million





BELLE EPOQUE Turandot, one of the last great examples of Moscow excess, remains a classic on the dining scene. *Above:* Chef Dmitry Eremeev is known for such dishes as beefsteak with nutlets.

FROM LEFT: MAISON CELLOS PR SERVICE (2); JOHN HUBA





THE MAESTROS OF MOSCOW

NEW GUARD ***From top:*** **At White Rabbit, Vladimir Mukhin prepares inventive meals, like gobbler, cowberries, and kartoplyaniki (potato dumplings) in a dandelion sauce.**

ROMAN SUSLOV (2)

"MOSCOW," COMPLAINED RUSSIAN WRITER NIKOLAI TURGENEV IN THE 18TH CENTURY, "IS AN ABYSS OF HEDONISTIC PLEASURE." MUCH HAS CHANGED AND MUCH, DESPITE THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION, HAS NOT—ESPECIALLY THE CITY'S TASTE FOR SERIOUSLY THEATRICAL DINING.

By Alex Halberstadt

As a child growing up on Moscow's outskirts in the 1970s, I visited a restaurant exactly once. I must have been eight. In Soviet times restaurants were decried as a bourgeois indulgence, meaning many were off limits except to party members and the cultural elite; average Muscovites ate at home. I was accompanied that one time by my grandmother, a patternmaker who designed homespun couture for Politburo wives and other influential women and for whom access to restaurants was an exotic perk of her social station.

I vividly remember what I ate—a dish of beef and mushrooms in sour cream that arrived at the table in a small clay pot—because I was nearly hyperventilating with excitement. My grandmother wore a mink turban and a silk sheath of her own design, and I had on the navy polyester blazer I wore to school. For the first time, I had an inkling of what people meant when they talked about glamour. And so in March, as Moscow's long winter packed up its squalls and the apple trees in front of the Bolshoi Theatre began to bud, I decided to update this memory and eat my way around the city of my youth.

Joan Didion wrote that the oral history of Los Angeles is written in piano bars. In Moscow that history is written in restaurants. Today the city is home to one of the most exciting dining scenes in Europe—exciting not primarily because of the quality of the cooking but because of the inventiveness, flamboyance, and downright strangeness of the experiences on offer. To eat out in Moscow is ➤➤

to begin to understand the city's social order and get a close-up view of its various clans in repose. But it is also more. To eat out in Moscow is to probe the limits of what eating can be—the limits of imagination, taste, and even reason.

Not even 25 years have passed since the demise of the Soviet Union, but restaurants in Moscow have become legion. One cause is that eating is central to so many rituals of Russian life—not simply as a staple of hospitality but as a cornerstone of people's private soul-baring. Because living quarters in Moscow have traditionally been cramped, and because public expressions of one's authentic self can be dangerous, Muscovites conduct important conversations in their kitchens. Telling the truth is always more agreeable on a full stomach. One of our most beloved fictional characters, the petty nobleman Oblomov, does little except eat, drink, and lament his inability to stop eating and drinking and do anything decisive. (There's even a name for this behavior: Oblomovism.) And there's something inalienably Russian about the pastime of surveying society's problems from behind a table laden with rich food—preferably dark rye bread and many small dishes, called zakuski, while lubricated with wine and an old cognac.

The first wave of ambitious restaurant eating in food-obsessed Moscow, in the late '90s, was unapologetically lavish. Born in the wake of an unprecedented privatization of state resources, its style reflected the sudden, staggering wealth of certain Russians, as well as the city's desire to catch up to and surpass its Western counterparts. And so, not long after arriving in Moscow, I began my pilgrimage at the classic restaurant of Russian capitalism, Turandot. This turned out to be an instructive spot for a late lunch, because Turandot possesses all the key ingredients of a successful Moscow restaurant: an outlandish concept, self-consciously expensive decor, prime opportunities for people watching, better than average food, and a highly developed sense of irony. Beyond its Florentine Courtyard, where visitors are greeted by Neptune, Venus, and a forest of Doric columns, a panopticon of themed private rooms—the Golden Cage Hall sounding the most risqué—beckons those who, according to Turandot's website, "have crossed the frontier of life's prose." To imagine the main dining room, picture being shrunk and then dropped into a Fabergé egg. The two-story space is covered floor to ceiling in picture-frame gilt, Ming-style vases, cupids, and divans upholstered in damask, all arranged around a chandelier so large and purple that it reduces first-time visitors to wordless staring. At dinner women in crinolines and powdered wigs play Baroque string instruments, a harpsichord, and a harp under the gleaming chinoiserie.

The menu is a snapshot of a time in Moscow when restaurants were free to serve whatever the chef pleased, as long as most of it was sushi. My entrée—a salad of mesclun and Kamchatka crab dressed inexplicably with mayonnaise—shared the plate with a solitary piece of shrimp nigiri. It was brought by a thin waiter in footman dress who looked as nervous as a greyhound. I paged through a wine list heavy on Bordeaux while a fountain burbled softly outside. The building houses five restaurants; the visionary behind them, Andrey Dellos, transformed the complex at 26 Tverskoy Boulevard into a minimall of fountains, classical statuary, and antiques that resembles an indoor Versailles. By the time I left, I wondered whether someday people might talk about Turnadot in the nostalgic way they do about Studio 54—as someplace extravagant, campy, and oddly touching.

TO EAT OUT IN MOSCOW IS TO *PROBE THE LIMITS OF WHAT EATING CAN BE*—THE LIMITS OF IMAGINATION, TASTE, AND EVEN REASON.

If filling up on raw octopus to the tinkling of a harpsichord is not your idea of fun, Moscow offers high-concept dining in other flavors. A short walk away, at Sirena, where your seafood needs are tended to by waiters in old-timey sailor uniforms, sturgeon appears on the menu and also under your feet, squirming on the other side of a glass floor. Or you can try the Ukrainian eatery Shinok, another of Dellos's creations, which surprises with an indoor barnyard where an elderly woman in folk dress, busy at knitting, watches over a peacock, a well-fed rabbit, and a melancholy calf named Gavriusha. (Whether you might enjoy having Gavriusha's soulful brown eyes trained on your beef tongue appetizer is, of course, a personal matter.) And at Expedition, across the street from the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, you can head directly to the authentic hunter's cabin on the roof, although you'd miss the orange Mi-2 military helicopter parked in the dining room amid Siberian pines. Vladimir Putin and his prime minister, Dmitry Medvedev, celebrated an electoral victory by grazing on Expedition's northern specialties, such as moose meat in aspic and frozen curls of a fish called muksun.

Moscow's predilection for theatrical eating also reaches the heights of fine dining. In 2011, Anatoly Komm became the country's most famous chef when his restaurant appeared on San Pellegrino's list of the best 50 in the world, the first Russian restaurant to do so. He named his molecular gastronomy showcase Varvary—barbarians—a flourish of confrontational irony about the perception of Russians abroad. Julia Zvereva, a restaurant blogger who recently began working with Komm on his PR, told me that from a business perspective, Varvary was a disaster. "Diners were





FROM LEFT: DMITRY FINYAGIN; MAXIM VOOVIN







FOOD NETWORK
Chef Vladimir Chistyakov (*above left*) and his specialties, which emphasize local ingredients, have made LavkaLavka (*left*) the de facto gathering place for the city's foodies.



HOT SEATS
Despite its hidden location, Delicatessen (*right*) is ever popular, thanks to its well-stocked bar and chef Ivan Shishkin (*far right*), known for his roast beef and pickles (*bottom*).





WATERING HOLE
Opposite: There is no better place for the oenophile than Tre Bicchieri, which has the best wine selection in the city. The food is equally impressive at this 12-year-old spot.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MASHA KUSHNIR; MARK BOYARSKY (2); CEDRIC ANGELES/INTERSECTION PHOTOS; ALEXEJI NAZARKIN (2)





PALATE PLEASERS
A smelt dish is one of the seasonal offerings at Twins (*below*), whose casual vibe but serious cooking are the work of identical twins Ivan and Sergey Berezutsky (*far left*).







FARE TRADE
Informality and comfort are key at Aussie Sebbie Kenyon's Les(art)ists. Prices are reasonable, and the food, including rib eye with carrots and artichokes (*left*), unfussy.

confused by the rye bread gels and borscht spheres on their plates and complained about the small portions," she told me. "I don't think Moscow was ready for Anatoly's vision." Komm's new restaurant, on Malaya Nikitskaya, just down the street from a mansion once occupied by Stalin's secret police chief Lavrenty Beria, offers superb modern versions of Russian dishes that feel muted, as though chastened by the excesses of the past.

Komm's main competitors are identical twins named Ivan and Sergey Berezutsky. Their deceptively casual-looking place, Twins, offers its tasting menu at a single table. A friend from New York joined me at a round table in the middle of a crowded dining room; for a moment, as heads turned, it felt as if we were about to be eaten. Dinner was delivered by the brothers themselves, who turned out to be disconcertingly young and soap-opera handsome. Dishes resembled edible Magritte canvases: clusters of glistening red berries on a branch made of chicken liver. A mystery broth alternating sour black currant–filled dumplings with sweeter ones filled with foie gras. One dish arrived atop a birch stump that was later opened to reveal another dish inside it. When we complimented their cooking, the Berezutskys pressed their hands to their hearts and nodded gravely, like opera singers at a curtain call.

As it happens, the precedent for Moscow's high-concept food culture existed long before the spartan eateries of my Soviet childhood. In the 18th century, after the court established itself in St. Petersburg, Moscow's nobility busied itself with idleness, hospitality, and eating. "Moscow is an abyss of hedonistic pleasure," complained Nikolai Turgenev, a poet and an associate of the Decembrists. "All its people do is eat, drink, sleep, go to parties, and play cards." As Orland Figes recounts in *Natasha's Dance*, restaurants proliferated in Moscow, as did luxe dining clubs like Angleterre, where Levin and Oblonsky have their famous lunch in one of the opening scenes of *Anna Karenina*. Two of the city's fashionable late night haunts, the Strelna and the Yar, appear often in Pushkin's poems. But the most unbridled eating happened on private estates, where the best serf cooks were paid exorbitant salaries and sent abroad for training. The gourmand Count Musin-Pushkin fattened his calves with cream and kept them in cradles like newborns. Count Stroganov (an ancestor of the one who gave his name to the beef dish) hosted "Roman dinners," during which guests reclined on couches and dined on bear paws, lynx, and cuckoos roasted in honey and brought to them by naked boys. Afterward everyone headed to the bathhouse to drink, building up a thirst by polishing off heaping spoonfuls of caviar. Russians enjoyed giving gifts of exotic food. The poet Gavrila Derzhavin was known for giving sandpipers. He once sent a colossal pie to Princess Bebolsina. When she cut it open, a dwarf climbed out and presented her with a truffle pie and a bouquet of forget-me-nots.

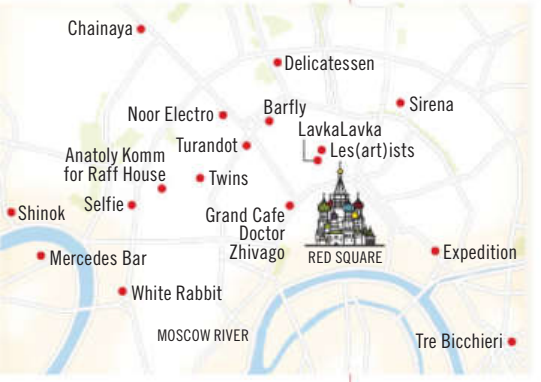
Much is different in today's Moscow, but not everything. The city suffers from rampant inequality, and many of the restaurants I visited, too expensive for the average Muscovite, tend to be patronized by the city's distinctive upper class, a mix of business owners, high government officials, and the more cultured class of gangster. A Venn diagram of these demographics would show heavy overlap, so I began to mentally index them as Moscow's "business class."

To be sure, the business class sensibility has evolved since the decade still sometimes called the "wild '90s." The raspberry three-button suit not infrequently spotted then has given way to a more sedate Moorish-blue model. Fox fur has been nearly banished. The metallic lemon and tangerine hues of Bentleys once seen idling in front of Café Pushkin have been tempered to tasteful burgundies and silvers. And the camp surrealism of Turandot and Shinok appears to be drifting out of favor. So is public gluttony. The Tsar's Breakfast at the Ritz-Carlton—a $700 morning bacchanal that included Kobe beef, foie gras au torchon, beluga caviar, a truffled omelet, and a personal bottle of Cristal for [CONTINUED ON PAGE 118]

TIPS & TACTICS

MOSCOW BY THE PLATE

Eating in Moscow isn't the outlandishly expensive pastime it once was. These days prices are in line with Western restaurants', and bargains abound. (Restaurants do tend to change prices daily, however, in keeping with the recent volatility of the ruble.) A 10 percent tip is customary; in case of exceptional service, or if you plan to return, leave 15 percent. Reservations are imperative at each of the places below, and here a savvy concierge will be a valuable ally. Russians eat their evening meal late, so for prime people-watching, 9 p.m. is optimal.



Twins: A casual showcase for Ivan and Sergey Berezutsky's serious cooking. The tasting menu is the city's most inventive. 13 MALAYA BRONNAYA, TWINSMOSCOW.RU

White Rabbit: Chef Vladimir Mukhin's *Alice in Wonderland*–themed flagship offers panoramic views of downtown and imaginative, precise cooking. Recently named 23rd-best restaurant in the world. SMOLENSKAYA PLOSHAD 3, WHITERABBITMOSCOW.COM

Anatoly Komm for Raff House: No one seems to be sure what Raff House is supposed to be, but the restaurant offers superb if slightly chastened fine dining from Russia's molecular gastronomy pioneer. 25 MALAYA NIKITSKAYA, RAFFHOUSE.COM/EN/ELEN.PHP

Turandot: Forgettable food, but the interior of this rococo fantasia is the most eye-popping in Moscow, or possibly anywhere. A glimpse of Russia's wild excess. 26/3 TVERSKOI BOULEVARD, MAISON-DELLOS.COM

LavkaLavka: The mothership of the city's foodies, LavkaLavka is the place for seasonal ingredients from local farms, as well as the best of Russia's beer and wine. A little bit of Brooklyn in Moscow. 21/2 PETROVKA, LAVKALAVKA.COM

Les(art)ists: Australian Sebbie Kenyon, late of Frenchie to Go in Paris, oversees the kind of restaurant still found here too rarely: a comfortable, unpretentious place serving fresh, confident cooking at realistic prices. 15 NEGLINNAYA, WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/LESARTISTSMOSCOW

Grand Café Doctor Zhivago: The high-camp dining room is open 24 hours and offers views of Red Square, but the best reason to come is the menu, a collection of expertly prepared Russian classics. Unparalleled people-watching. 15/1C1 MOKHOVAYA, 011-7-499 922-0100

Tre Bicchieri: The most serious, and fairly priced, wine selection in the city, served in an atmospheric cellar by a vastly knowledgeable staff. 2A ULITSA ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN, 011-7-903-724-7426

Delicatessen: Hidden in a Soviet-era courtyard, Delicatessen offers the most complete bar program in Moscow, along with an excellent, playful menu. A lovely spot to sample nalivki (infused spirits), a Russian delicacy. 20/2 SADOVAYA-KARETNAYA, NEWDELI.RU

Chainaya: Some of the city's best cocktails and Chinese cooking, served in a Victorian opium den. Be sure to call well ahead, or, better yet, go with a regular. 1-YA TVERSKAYA-YAMSKAYA 29, 011-7-495-967-3052

MAP: HASAM HUSSEIN. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ALEXANDRE AVERIN; ROMAN SUSLOV (2); NATASHA SEDOVA (2)


MOUNTAIN TIME

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 82] as though severed by the stroke of an axe—out of which the warm blood was trickling."

Exhausted from the day's hike, I eventually fell asleep, and I awoke to see the walls of our tent glowing with the first morning light. I unzipped the flap and crawled out onto the frost-covered ground, feeling suddenly like a supplicant to Nanda Devi, which soared above me in all of her 25,000 feet of glory.

The clouds that had draped her the day before were gone, so I could see her craggy flanks, which rose steeply all the way from the valley floor. I understood then why the people of Uttarakhand still sing songs about her and build small, crude temples of stone to her in these hills. Nanda Devi may be nothing more than rock, but I can tell you that it is rock with a powerful and even beneficent presence. In front of her was Nanda Khat, which is said to be her bed, and about 25 miles to the south stood Nanda Kot, which is said to be her fortress but, with its wide, wedged peak, looks more like a slot-head screwdriver pulled from God's toolbox.

Ricky crawled out of our little tent, which glistened with a thin crust of frost, just as the sun sent a fiery orange slash across the valley, like a molten moat between the mountains and us. "Oh my god," he whispered. We stood silent for several minutes, not able to find words that could contain the immensity of what lay before us.

Praveen, dressed in a smart black uniform with a Nehru jacket, set our breakfast table facing the peaks and laid it with homemade yogurt, fat cubes of chewy granola, honey, pomegranate seeds, scrambled eggs, French press coffee, and tea served in a silver pitcher. Over breakfast Ricky and I counted 10 staffers popping in and out of the kitchen tent.

After we had eaten, Rino joined us to discuss the plan for the day. "Would you gentlemen like to continue on to the glacier?" he asked, pointing in the direction of Nanda Devi. "We'd be much closer to the mountain, but it would take us two more days of hiking and two more nights in tents."

As much as I wanted to get closer to the mountains, I wasn't sure I was up to another hike like the one we had just endured, not to mention sleeping two more nights on the frosty tundra.

"What's the alternative?" Ricky asked.

"The alternative is hiking downhill for a few hours to 360° Leti, where you can sit in front of the fireplace at dinner and sleep in a bed in your own warm room with a view of the glacier," Rino said.

"I would never want to put the staff through two more nights of sleeping outside," Ricky said, doing his best to look selfless.

"Oh, the staff are fine," Rino said. "They love camping and would have no problem at all if you want to continue to the glacier."

"No," Ricky said firmly. "No way will I put them through that, no matter how much I want to continue on. And I'm sure Kevin feels the same way," he added, shooting me a glance that said, Be with me on this or you'll be sorry. I nodded in assent.

And so it was that a badly feigned concern for others landed us in the sort of mountaintop compound that Philip Johnson might have designed if he had been asked. 360° Leti is an assemblage of four rectangular slope-roofed stone guest cabins, each with two walls made entirely of glass, and a similarly designed but larger building that serves as a common area and dining room.

We were greeted on arrival with cool towels, welcome drinks of chilled watermelon juice, and two steaming bowls of perfumed water to soak our feet in, situated so that we had a view of the terraced wheat fields that carpeted the entire valley in deep green. The sound of drums and of women singing wafted up from a wedding party far below, and a troop of pink-faced rhesus macaques, many with babies clinging to their backs, frolicked all around us until the resident dog arrived to send them scattering down the mountain and out of sight.

We fell into an easy routine at 360° Leti, waking to a wall of glass framing jagged, snow-dusted peaks, having a leisurely breakfast outside, taking easy hikes to nearby villages or along mountain paths, meeting Rino in the main building at cocktail hour for chickpea flour blinis in front of the fire followed by a candlelit dinner of moussaka or butter chicken or broccoli soup studded with Roquefort, or some other invariably entrancing dish. The nights were clear and star-filled, and our wood stove was always cranking when we returned from dinner. With no other guests to talk to, no television to distract us, and surrounded by the silence of the mountains, we would page through picture books of India until we drifted off to the sleep of the innocent.

On our last day we met Yeshi, the chef, who worked his magic in the kitchen under a two-by-three-foot color portrait of the Dalai Lama. He's happy to share his techniques for making dumplings or curry, or any of his other dishes. When you go to 360° Leti, be sure to take a lesson from him, as much for the experience of being with him as to learn a particular technique.

Yeshi, who is 52 but looks 10 years younger, studied in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in India from the time he was eight until he was 26, which might have something to do with his frequent bursts of laughter, his perpetual smile, and his presence, which catches you completely off guard by making you feel instantly lighter.

I asked him about his life as a monk while he demonstrated his kitchen prowess by nimbly transforming dabs of dough into dumpling skins with a short wooden roller. "I was the oldest of four children. My parents decided I would be a monk, and so they sent me to the monastery. Every three years I would get a two-month holiday when I could go home and see them." He continued rolling dough as he talked.

"Why did you leave the monastery?" I asked.

"Oh, that is a little bit of a silly story," he said. "Actually, when I was 26 I left the monastery to visit an uncle in Nepal. I stayed with him for a month, and when I returned to India I decided I wanted to see Delhi, Dharmsala, Ladakh…" He pointed north, south, east, and west with his rolling pin as he named all the places he had traveled. "I just started looking, looking, looking—and I forgot to go back!"

"You forgot?" I asked incredulously.

"Yes!" he said, laughing so hard that he had to catch his breath. "After six months I remembered, but by then it was too late."

As our cooking lesson ended and the time to fly home drew nearer, I reflected on how once again India had given me far more than it had asked of me. Some difficult hikes notwithstanding, I didn't feel old; I felt as if there was nothing I couldn't do. And forgetting to go back seemed like an incredibly inspired idea. «



ADVANCE RESERVATIONS

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 105] and improved. Of course, he added, at the Ritz the rooms would not be touched, or not much, anyway; all of the unique features, such as the peach-colored towels specified by César Ritz, would be preserved. "Except…"

"Except?"

"…that the number of rooms would decrease to 142 from 159, with 50 percent turned into suites."

And there, I realized, was the true rub. The Ritz really wants you only if you can rent multiple rooms. Indeed, the rich no longer want just expensive bedrooms; they want living rooms and dining rooms.

Uber-luxury hotels are about money; this is not what has changed. Rather, it's the nature of money—or the amounts of it, the reach of the high bid—that's different. The Ritz is no longer for the one percent. It is not even for the .001 percent. It is for the aristocracy of the .001 percent.

This reduction in room number and increase in room size is a fundamental shift in the Ritz's business model, as well as its design. The premise is that the less dependent you are on people who are exposed to the economic elements—a client base, for all practical purposes, inured from market forces—the safer you are. While "expense account" used to be the passport to indulgence, now, Boyens says, with some sadness, if you are on an expense account the Ritz is probably not for you. This is a world of hedge-funders, sheikhs, and oligarchs, replacing not only ordinary businesspeople but the Ritz's signature clients: actors, fashion people, and other varied elite of taste and visual style. The Ritz now requires the kind of money that demands ever more luxury. (One of the features of the new Ritz is secret access through a tunnel from an underground parking area beneath the Place Vendôme to the hotel—a feature that might have saved Diana and Dodi from the paparazzi.)

The terrible thing about a top-down renovation is that it disrupts the internal sense of the hotel itself (suddenly long-standing employees—and good hotels always have ancien régime staffs—appear in new, unaccustomed, froufrou uniforms) and passes power to an outsider, an architect or designer or decorator.

At Claridge's there is still considerable grumbling among staff and long-loyal guests at the lobby's 1996 renovation, which turned it from relaxed sitting area to razzle-dazzle dining piazza, ordered up by the Blackstone Group and executed by Thierry Despont, whose daughter I accosted and who now holds the fate of the Ritz in his hands.

Despont, a Frenchman whose office is in New York, is principally a designer of rich men's homes—Bill Gates and Calvin Klein, among others. He is often dismissed in the competitive world of high-end architects as a mere decorator, more courtier than artist. Indeed, he qualified for the Ritz job not least of all because he designed a house in Connecticut for Ali Al Fayed. In architect Richard Meier's 1997 book about the building of the Getty Museum, a project in which Despont had a controversial role, Meier quotes the Italian architecture critic Francesco Dal Co, who describes Despont's designs as "coquettish and brutal...the dreams—or nightmares?—of a parvenu."

Still, if Despont strikes some as frightening, Meier and his towering ilk (i.e., Robert A. M. Stern and Frank Gehry) might sound, at least in terms of the Ritz, worse: The last thing you want is an architect who will surely try to make it his hotel. In that sense, a courtier is better than the artist.

Despont's office, where I'm greeted by his PR person and another from the Ritz, is a modern sort of baronial setting outfitted in fine woods and resplendent detailing, a redone 19th-century factory building in Tribeca not necessarily boding positively for the 19th-century Ritz.

I find, however, that the 67-year-old Despont, in German hunting jacket, is an eloquent and genial advocate for the Ritz. He seems very much aware of his curatorial and preservationist responsibilities. In some sense, his own reputation hangs in the balance. (On the other hand, if the mega-rich are happy with a new mega-Ritz, his reputation is also secure.) Intellectually, he is as grounded in the sensibility of taste and time and place and Proustian memory as you might hope. We straightaway have a nicely fetishistic discussion about the merits of the Ritz bathrooms, which, of course, he is ripping out, only to, he assures, precisely replace. Not to worry.

Despont tells me that when it was announced in the late '90s that he was redoing the Claridge's lobby, Constantine, the former king of Greece, who was staying there, grabbed him by the shirt front and threatened his life—only, according to Despont, to be happy with the result.

And he takes a deserved dig at Richard Meier: "If you want a house by Richard Meier you want a house by Richard Meier, but it's not going to be your house." The Ritz would not be the Ritz, his message seems to be, if it were done by someone with less humility than his own.

When I test him on what he thinks of the Connaught, he passes with flying colors: "Here is an example of—they killed this thing. This is so insane. Some idiot takes the Connaught and doesn't know what they have and hired some designer to rape that place."

Most reassuring, and with what seemed to be a particular understanding of the value of the Ritz remaining the Ritz, Despont speaks of the hotel's ghosts as whom you really want to meet when you are there—and, indeed, at least up until the closing they were there, in fine form.

Because I want to believe him, I do. The reconfigured lobby, with its new retractable roof opening and closing the outdoor terrace for year-round dining; the vast new underground ballroom; the spa, now enlarged with the acquisition of a former bank next door; the new enlarged rooms and premium suites stuffed with amenities; the redesigned gardens—"a fabulous place," Despont offers, "to tell your wife you want a divorce." Yes. An even better Ritz. Maybe it could be.

Or maybe all those good intentions will be destroyed by the need to build something sui generis a century from now. The reason to want to preserve the Ritz is to hold on to the time in which it was built and in which it grew. But all hotels, being products of the market, technology, and class and demographics, may in fact represent only the here and now (or face oblivion if they don't). What's more, defending the purity, integrity, and aesthetic legacy of the exclusive provinces of the rich is never going to be a popular or civic-minded cause.

And yet…

I would argue that the mark of a truly grand hotel is one that doesn't quite give in. Or it wages a clandestine war for taste and style. For there is little as alive, enduring, evocative, and pleasurable as a well-tended hotel, especially one from that most optimistic and exemplary epoch in which the greatest were built, of which the Ritz is both one of the best and one of the last. «



A PLACE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 99] You could spend two days exploring the massive Topkapi Palace, and someday you may. But on a quick trip confine yourself to an area of particular interest—perhaps the Treasury section, with the fourth-largest diamond of its kind and the Emerald Dagger, star of the 1964 movie *Topkapi*. For me, though, it was the royal harem.

The underachieving Mehmet II, a nomad at heart, designed Topkapi with four courtyards—that is, with significantly more outdoor than indoor space. The longest-reigning Ottoman sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, imposed a rule of absolute silence in all areas of the palace—no laughing, shouting, or speaking loudly (a completist, he also engaged deaf-mutes to serve him). As we walk through the first two courtyards, now public gardens, I find myself regretting that the rule died with him. But then, his menagerie is gone too; gazelles, peacocks, giraffes, even reindeer once roamed these grounds.

Apo suggests that I think of the royal harem less as the sultan's sexual playpen, a common misconception, than as a girls boarding school. "Like that Julia Roberts movie *Mona Lisa Smile*," he says. This makes me laugh, yet it's not far off the mark. Here the Ottoman Empire's most promising girls, many Georgian or Circassian, often blond, were groomed to marry nobility or royalty, or to be a favorite of the sultan. No doubt there was high drama in that scenario, but walking the maze of rooms within rooms today, there is only serenity—the cooling Iznik tiles and *hareki* (or palace) carpets showcasing their purpose—to echo the harmony and symmetry of nature.

The sultan was the only heterosexual man allowed within the walls of the harem, which was guarded by African eunuchs (homosexual only, to be super-duper sure of no hanky-panky), whose quarters were off the harem's hauntingly lovely first corridor. A runway-like pebbled centerpiece in the stone floor provokes fantasies of a 16th-century *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

Apo tells me the story of Suleiman's second wife, Hurrem Sultan. Madly in love with the Slavic concubine, Suleiman had his favorite son murdered to ensure that one of Hurrem's sons would ascend the throne. In a less bloody mood, Hurrem commissioned Sinan to build her a double-domed hammam, which still stands between Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque and is now open to the public (men on one side, women on the other). I had hammam trepidation after a particularly savage experience in Fez, where a woman scrubbed me with sadistic vigor. Never fear: The 500-year-old **AyaSofya Hurrem Sultan Hamam** (AYASOFYAHAMAMI.COM) is as much high-end spa as centuries-old Ottoman sanctuary, and exhausting only in the most exquisite way. (The traditional hammam is not private; for an exceptional solo or couples experience, try the Raffles Spa.) (RAFFLES.COM/ISTANBUL/SPA)

EMINONU HOTELS: If you don't care about nightlife—or any action after dark— then Eminonu is a good option. The district essentially shuts down after 7 p.m. The **Four Seasons Hotel at Sultanahmet** is steps from the Blue Mosque, as well as a reconstructed piece of history. The luxuriously restored building used to be the city prison—the one, in fact, where *Midnight Express* was filmed (FOR HOTEL DETAILS SEE PAGE 69).

EMINONU RESTAURANTS: The unpretentious **Hamdi** (TAHMIS CD. KALCIN SOKAK NO. 11) has a notable panorama of the old city from its top floor, an extensive selection of kebabs (pistachio!), and arguably Istanbul's best baklava, served in nearly bite-size pieces that you eat honey side up. There's also **Pandeli** (MISIR CARSISI NO. 1), a hidden delight inside the main entrance of the Spice Market, with traditional food and decor, plus a lovely view of the Golden Horn.

THE BOSPHORUS: *A Sea Runs Through It*

"The Bosphorus sings of life, pleasure, and happiness. The city draws its strength from [it]," Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk wrote in his 2005 memoir of his hometown, *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. Certainly, the city draws peace from the 17-mile strait that connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, the last gasp of the Mediterranean. Along the Bosphorus's two shores, European and Asian, sit the city's treasured waterfront *yalis*, wood mansions that charmingly abut the strait. The opposing currents—the Mediterranean's saltier water running beneath the Black Sea's—create an invigorating churn; the air, free of the dirt and noise of the city, works like a sedative.

Apo suggests that we spend a day avoiding traffic entirely and travel by water. We board in the district of **Sisli**, then skim along the European side to **Bebek**, Istanbul's most desirable neighborhood, which sits just beyond the strait's namesake bridge, a majestic affair reminiscent of the Golden Gate. We stop for breakfast at **Bebek Kahve** (BEBEKKAHVE.COM.TR), a 65-year-old institution on the water. If the Bosphorus hasn't already seduced you, the simit sandwiches or menemen omelets will. You could come to Istanbul just for the extensive Turkish breakfasts (*kahvalti*), which vary from region to region, and still offer clotted cream, freshly churned butter, and honey on the comb.

Back in the boat, we continue north, past Mehmet II's Rumeli Fortress, draped over the hills like a necklace, crossing over to the greener Asian side at the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge. Here the *yalis* are among the most expensive properties in the world, with prices reaching $150 million; built by Ottoman grandees in the 18th and 19th centuries, they are now home to Turkey's wealthiest. Six hundred remain; twice as many were destroyed in the city's many catastrophic fires—the downside to wood, which is so superior in earthquakes.

Adjacent to the Bosphorus Bridge on the Asian side is the **Beylerbeyi Palace**, where sultans—increasingly besotted with Western luxury—moved house in the 19th century. It is now a museum, and you can stop and feast on rooms with ever more colossal chandeliers and pretentious, stiff-backed furniture, all opulently upholstered, none inviting. It makes me nostalgic for the minimalist tiles and low divans of Topkapi. More lounging, less sitting, I say.

Asian Istanbul is more residential and laid-back. Its oldest neighborhood, **Kadikoy**, is where you'll find the city's most inviting food market (open-air, as opposed to Eminonu's covered and more famous Spice Market). Consider these streets a beginner's guide to the cuisine, of Turkey, where fresh and local is how things have always been done. You'll also find more vestiges of nomadic life. "We are masters of preserving food," Apo says. I pass stalls with vats of pickles—pickled everything, from small melons to tiny eggplants. A vitrine of goat heads reminds me of a Damien Hirst installation. Strands of dried peppers, okra, even sheep intestines hang from awnings. A man offers me a slice of the beloved Turkish pastrami.

We stop for lunch at **Ciya Sofrasi** (CIYA.COM.TR), a spot revered by chefs worldwide for owner Musa Dagdeviren's near-anthropological approach to his country's gustatory secrets. Ciya (pronounced *CHEE-ya)* is a *lokanta*, which to natives signifies home-style cooking. Apo tells me to forget the menu, which doesn't list the daily seasonal specials. We choose from a meze tray: wonderful wild herb salads, yogurt with purslane, stuffed eggplant, and lamb and cherry meatballs. The waiter brings warm balloon bread (balon ekmek), which we tear into pieces, fill with meze, and top with sumac, the addictive, lemony-tasting red spice. A small plates fan, I appreciate that waiters don't bat an eye if you stick with mezes at any meal. (At night they are accompanied by Turkey's alcohol of choice, the anise-flavored raki—pronounced *RAK-uh*—for which I did not acquire a taste.)

Lunch is followed by small glasses of sherbet, a drink—sometimes sweet, sometimes tart—made from fruit or flower petals. Today's is hibiscus (gurhal); depending on the season, tomorrow's might be black mulberry or pomegranate. We sample the candied pumpkin and tahini; even desserts here offer a lesson in opposites.

On our way back to the boat, Apo takes me to **Sekerci Cafer Erol** (SEKERCICAFERER OL.COM), a 200-year-old confectioner that sells Istanbul's best Turkish Delight, as well as towers of marzipan; my favorite comes topped with rose petal jam. Apo rubs his generous stomach with satisfaction. "A man without a belly is like a house without a balcony."

BOSPHORUS HOTELS: All of the best are on the European side. If money is no object, rent one (or all three) of **Armaggan Bosporus Suites**' lavishly restored *yalis*. Adjacent to the Bosphorus Bridge, they have killer views, exquisite Armaggan furnishings and textiles, and access to a charming wooden yacht docked right at your front door. The suites are located in **Ortakoy**, one of the city's liveliest neighborhoods, packed with restaurant and bar options. (You can also rent individual rooms in the *yalis*; FROM $983, ARMAGGANBOSPORUS.COM.) If you prefer a hotel, the **Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus**, a converted Ottoman palace, is widely considered the city's most beautiful, with a pool right on the water (FROM $400, FOURSEASONS.COM). The **Shangri-La Bosphorus**, a former tobacco factory, is lovely too, but it has no grounds or access to the water (FROM $260, SHANGRI-LA.COM).

BOSPHORUS RESTAURANTS: There are, strangely, no Michelin-starred restaurants in this world food capital, but there are worthy contenders, all with stunning Bosphorus views. **Vogue**, a minimalist gem, sits incongruously at the top of an ugly office building (VOGUERESTAURANT.COM). **Ulus 29** has a terrific sommelier and a polished menu of traditional Turkish cuisine (ULUS29.COM). And **Muzedechanga** graces the gardens of the Sakip Sabanci Museum, in the district of Sariyer—farther up the strait but worth the trip (CHANGA-ISTANBUL.COM).

BEYOGLU: *Bohemian Rhapsody*

"Every neighborhood in Istanbul has its own personality," Apo tells me, though these days it's often split—half what it was and half what it's becoming (with locals understandably concerned about the downsides of gentrification). Until the 19th century, neighborhoods—or *mahalleler*—operated in the manner of the culture living in them: Greek, Armenian, Jewish, Muslim. Beyoglu, originally settled by non-Muslim minorities, has always been the city's most cosmopolitan district.

Istanbul's art scene is exploding, and Beyoglu is the hub. Currently it is hosting parts of the **14th Istanbul Biennial** (September 5 to November 1), the most expansive in the city's history, with, for the first time, locations on the Asian side and on Prince's Island, a no-car getaway for Istanbullus. (The **Art International** fair happens at the same time, followed by **Contemporary Istanbul** in mid-November.) Eighty galleries have sprung up since 2005, and much of the credit goes to the city's first museum devoted to contemporary Turkish art: **Istanbul Modern**, which opened in the neighborhood of **Tophane** in 2004, offers a good primer for the scene.

Nearby **Karakoy** quickly becomes my favorite neighborhood. *Koy* means village and *Kara* means black, a reference to the clothing of the Jews who turned this into a financial district. The imposing old banks on the Fleet Street–like Bankalar Caddesi were built in the 19th century. I am struck in particular by the renovation of the former Ottoman Bank, now the nonprofit cultural institute **Salt Galata**. I love the lobby's marble walls, seemingly made of salt—a striking showcase for Turkey's visionary design team, Autoban—and the cleverly curated **Bank Museum** in the basement, which offers a quirky slice of local history.

Karakoy is still home to most of the city's hardware and machine parts stores, and the appealing grubbiness of those places is now juxtaposed with hipster coffee shops, bars, and stores (no city, apparently, can escape hipsters). Up a steep slope, the neighborhood of **Galata**—named for the 14th-century Galata Tower at the top, which has panoramic views—is where you'll find small, trendy boutiques (think Williamsburg, not Soho).

Kadikoy's upscale neighbor, **Cinhangir**, is full of elegant cafés and antiques stores. It's also home to the idiosyncratic and charming **Museum of Innocence**, the creation of Orhan Pamuk, who wrote the 2008 novel of the same name. (I had read it, but an excellent recorded guide makes the museum accessible to anyone.) A hidden highlight in a city of highlights, it is a must for fans of eccentricity, obsessive love, and (unintentionally, perhaps) the artist Joseph Cornell.

Turks have a long and sentimental relationship with France, and **Istiklal Street**, once the Grand Rue of Pera, resembled Paris when it was built. There are still no cars allowed, so it offers prime people watching. Some of the best contemporary galleries are here: **Salt Beyoglu** (011-90-212-377-4200), **Rampa** (011-90-212-327-0800), **Pi Artworks** (011-90-212-293-7103), **Gaia** (011-90-212-243-4973), and **Galerist** (011-90-212-252-1896). The last shares a building, the 19th-century Misir Aparmani, with the rooftop bar **360**, a hot spot with superb views.

A few minutes' walk from Istiklal is the **Pera Palace Hotel**. The city's first in the grand European style, it was built in 1892 to host passengers from the Orient Express (Ernest Hemingway among them, naturally). I had seen a poignant photo of the alumni association of eunuchs of the imperial harem, who would meet here after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. What would they reminisce about, I wonder? They likely sipped Turkish tea, as I am doing now, and perhaps sampled the jewel-like confections from the **Patisserie de Pera**. The vibe of the place is not unlike that of an Agatha Christie novel—no surprise, given that she wrote parts of *Murder on the Orient Express* here; guests of the hotel can visit her room (FOR HOTEL DETAILS SEE PAGE 69).

We walk back toward Istiklal along narrow side streets, each crowded with coffeehouses and raki bars. Customers sit outside, perched on tiny stools around knee-high tables, intensely focused on backgammon boards. "As addictive as cocaine," says Apo.

BEYOGLU HOTELS: The problem with luxury hotels, more often than not, is that once you step into the lobby you leave the flavor of the city behind. The philosophy of the

House Hotel Collection is that authenticity is as critical as thread count. Its fourth Istanbul hotel, the **Vault Karakoy**, is a former bank restored by two local stars, architect Han Tumertekin and designer Sinan Kafader. It's more boutique than luxe hotel, but each room is beautifully appointed (THEHOUSEHOTEL.COM). The **St. Regis Istanbul**, which opened in March, is in the leafy, sophisticated neighborhood of **Nisantsi**, a mecca for luxury shoppers where you'll find virtually every international label. Designed in a novel Deco-Turkish style by top architect Emre Arolat, the building houses Lanvin, Alexander McQueen, and Tom Ford boutiques.

BEYOGLU RESTAURANTS: There are three can't-miss modern *lokantas*, all booked weeks in advance, so plan ahead: New York–trained chef Didem Senol's **Lokanta Maya** (KEMANKES KARAMUSTAFA PASA, KEMANKES CD. NO. 35), **Karakoy Lokantasi** (KEMANKES KARAMUSTAFA PASA MH., KEMANKES CD. NO. 37/A), and **Meze by Lemon Tree** (MESRUTIYET CD. NO. 83/B). For trendier diners, there's **Rudolf**, chef Rudolf van Nunen's chic spot in the new Morgans Hotel (10 KARAKOY, KEMERALTI CD.). All-star kebabs can be found at the more casual **Ali Ocakbasi**—just don't fill up on the meze. The kusleme (lamb kebab) and saslik (beef and veal) are the reason you're here (ALIOCAKBASI.COM). Another favorite, **Eleos**, is a bright, Aegean-style fish taverna (water view included) hidden on the second floor of a shabby office building (ELEOSRESTAURANT.COM). Restaurants in unexpected places could have their own Istanbul tour.

FATIH: *To Haggle or Not to Haggle*

I do not bargain. I have tried and failed miserably. I therefore dread, with something akin to panic, my trip to the **Grand Bazaar**. To Istanbullus, the bazaar is an entire neighborhood in the old city's Fatih district. To tourists it's the covered 15th-century building that is essentially the oldest mall in the world (its roof the site of another James Bond chase, in *Skyfall*).

Apo gives me the lay of the land: "What you have are 4,200 stalls selling the same 10 things, and many of them are cheap knockoffs." He takes it personally when he sees stores claiming to sell Iznik tiles that are really only clay, or a dealer trying to pass off Chinese rugs as Turkish. "I go mad, because these are our art," he says. "This is why I show people the work only of craftsmen whose families have been in the business for generations." Another rule of thumb: "Be sure the family is making those things, not just selling them."

I'm relieved to find that the vendors are less aggressive than in Morocco, but I am also dizzy after just one of the bazaar's 64 streets. Apo quickly maneuvers me to **Epoque**, where wealthy Istanbullus buy museum-quality antiques; **Kafkas**, where locals get their fine jewelry; **Egin Tekstil**, which has shelves crammed with exceptional bedspreads, towels, and bathrobes; **Sivalsi Istanbul Yazmacisi**, for every Turkish or Middle Eastern fabric imaginable (a favorite of New York's ABC Carpet & Home and Donna Karan); and **Iznik Classics**, where you're guaranteed true quartz tiles and ceramics. All the shops are too successful to bother with the hard sell.

I'm much happier on the up-and-coming streets behind the bazaar, featuring the work of exceptional luxury artisans and, perhaps more important, fixed prices. **Armaggan** (ARMAGGAN.COM), on Nuruosmaniye, is a seven-floor department store housing the company's haute couture clothing, furniture, and jewelry, as well as an art gallery and cooking school. Its restaurant, **Nar Lokanta**, is a (deserved) favorite for its epicurean makeovers of traditional mezes.

You could just go to Armaggan and call it a day, but then you'd miss the tiny shop of **Sevan Bicakci**, a.k.a. Lord of the Rings (SEVANBICAKCI.COM). The most spectacular of his one-of-a-kind creations include three-dimensional objects (such as a minuscule Hagia Sophia) under gem domes. Making these tiny worlds within a ring involves a tribe of artisans: sculptors, goldsmiths, engravers, and miniature painters. You'd also miss **Punto**, housed in a picturesque 17th-century caravanserai (PUNTOCARPET.COM). "The family has been in the business for 500 years," Apo says. "To sell one rug they'll show 100." I see nearly that many as I sip Turkish tea in a traditional tulip-shaped glass. I don't know what's more impressive, the magnificent silk *harekis* or the two men flipping and rolling them as if they were made of tissue paper. I am dazzled yet again.

HOW AND WHEN TO BOOK

Earl Starkey of Sophisticated Travel specializes in custom-designed luxury travel throughout Turkey and offers 24-hour concierge services and the most educated guides. In addition to comprehensive trips, the company can focus on key interests, like history, food, shopping, or art. Suggested months: April (for the annual tulip festival, when Istanbul is covered in millions of blooms) through early June, and September through October. INFO@SOPHISTICATED-TRAVEL.COM, OR CONTACT EARL STARKEY DIRECTLY AT 212-409-9587 «



THE MAESTROS OF MOSCOW

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 113] each diner—has been toned down as well. (Fortunately, Moscow dining hasn't completely lost its exuberance. Not long ago a chef named Dmitri Shurshakov created an uproar when his new restaurant, Muesli, offered a raw veal dish named "Tartare à la Stalin." Shurshakov didn't see what the big deal was. "I have tremendous respect for the man," he told a journalist.)

Still, it's difficult to miss the dreary corporate ethos making itself felt across the city. The Mercedes Bar, on the 31st floor of the brutalist Hotel Ukraina (officially, the Radisson Royal Hotel), is outfitted with club chairs and flat-screen TVs, and the German carmaker's logo is stamped on nearly everything. Placing the keys to your own Mercedes on your bill will net you a 5 percent discount. *Vogue* and *Tatler* have opened branded cafés, and no restaurant is more in demand with the business class than chef-owner Vladimir Mukhin's Selfie, located above a Maserati dealership and adjacent to the Barricades metro stop and a Stalin-era high-rise. To eat at Selfie is to gain insight into why the Bolshevik Revolution happened. The dining room walls are tufted buff leather; the glassed-in wine room beams spotlights on magnums of Dom Pérignon and crates of trophy Bordeaux left open in the fake-casual manner of a photo shoot; a squad of runway-ready hostesses patrols the room on chopstick-thin stilettos. Why I decided to go to Selfie with my father, an ornery film buff who lives far from the city center and rarely eats outside his kitchen, I'm really not sure. He hunched over the table in a seaweed-colored sweater and cast sidelong glances at the dark-suited captains of industry around us. Our avocado salad and porcini risotto were fresh and faultless, but Selfie left us gloomy and impatient to leave.

I needed a break from canapés and velvet and longed for some soulful Russian angst, so I headed to the Moscow Conservatory to hear the philharmonic perform Shostakovich's Seventh, the clanging, cacophonous symphony that premiered in 1942, during

the Leningrad blockade. It sounded grand. Oddly, the young woman in the seat beside mine spent most of the night on her smartphone, flipping through styled photos of food. Afterward, though it felt silly, I took a turn onto Red Square to check on Lenin's mausoleum. When I was a child our ursine leaders stood atop it on state holidays and waved at processions of severely combed schoolchildren and tractor-trailers laden with intercontinental ballistic missiles as long as a city block. These days Lenin's name—almost illegible on the tomato soup–colored granite—looks into an Hermès shop window.

Later I wandered into a dark alley off Petrovka Street and found myself in front of a discreet sign that read "LavkaLavka" ("little shop"). The farm goods store and adjacent restaurant were filled with artist types, thirtysomething hipsters and their kids, and turned out to be the Moscow clubhouse for committed foodies. The seasonal dishes are made entirely with domestic ingredients (no parmesan cheese, no foie gras) from farmers identified on the menu. To my surprise, the wine was domestic too, and mostly delicious, much of it from Kuban, the Cossack heartland. A savory red krasnostop from the Vedernikov winery was just the thing alongside a plate of cured goose, while a salad of beets and parsnips (in Russian, parsnip is called pasternak, like *Doctor Zhivago*'s author) proved a swell pairing with a pinot blanc–aligoté blend from Château Le Grand Vostock. Watching the enthusiastic young staff talk excitedly about organic farming and indigenous root vegetables over the squalls of children somehow made me feel at home.

A night at LavkaLavka reminded me that Moscow—like, say, Los Angeles—is a cultural archipelago, where much of what is worth doing remains partly hidden from public view. Connections, access, and information sometimes matter more here than money, and the following night Kostya Pilberg, LavkaLavka's 31-year-old bar manager, led me on a nighttime tour of the city's speakeasies. The entrance to Delicatessen, in a rear courtyard of a decrepit Khrushchev-era apartment block, didn't prepare me for the pristinely retro interior or the brilliant cocktails and nalivki (fruit and berry infusions) served in antique cordial glasses. A young couple beside us, dressed in the bright finery of the 1920s, could have passed for Vladimir Mayakovsky and Lilya Brik. After a swing through Noor Electro, a cocktail bar where bartenders in white jumpsuits look like characters from *A Clockwork Orange*, and Barfly, a subterranean dive bar where a bouncer patted us down, we ended up in another deserted courtyard, in one of the city's two Chinatowns (don't ask), in front of an unmarked metal door.

"Who invited you?" a voice from a tinny speaker demanded after Pilberg pressed the buzzer. A moment later, a young man dressed like a bellboy from a Viennese hotel ushered us downstairs into Chainaya ("tea house"). Bartenders chiseled at mammoth ice cubes under a pagoda roof; cooks from Beijing labored beside sizzling woks; Serge Gainsbourg cooed on the stereo. Murky back rooms decorated with Chinese antiques suggested a Victorian opium den. Over a Sazerac and a plate of lo mein, I asked the manager whether the bar's invitation-only policy meant that just a handful of Moscow aficionados knew about his establishment. He grinned and said that Chainaya was currently 29th on the list of the world's best bars, published yearly in London.

The next night, following a tip from a Moscow sommelier, I found myself in yet another darkened stairwell, this one behind a humdrum restaurant located, a little awkwardly, on Solzhenitsyn Street. Hundreds of empty bottles from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti lined the walls. I had come to Tre Bicchieri with my New York friend and Zvereva, the Moscow food blogger, who had never heard of it. Maxim Vdovin, who greeted us, told me that the tiny 12-year-old wine bar used to be so well concealed that people sometimes paid to be given the address. Today it's findable on Google, and it happens to be the nicest thing about Moscow's young and generally overpriced wine scene. When I asked about red Burgundies, Vdovin persuaded me to try Meyer-Näkel's 2010 Pfarrwingert Spätburgunder instead, an astounding pinot noir from Germany's Ahr region that tastes the way stained glass in a medieval church looks. He then poured us a 20-year-old Royal Tokaji Aszú Essencia, Hungary's most unctuous sweet wine, while regaling us with stories about Henri Jayer's Burgundies, some of the most sought-after wines of the last century. Two couples at another table were finishing off a bottle of 2001 Le Chambertin and gearing up to open another, and we decided to say our goodbyes while we could still afford to leave.

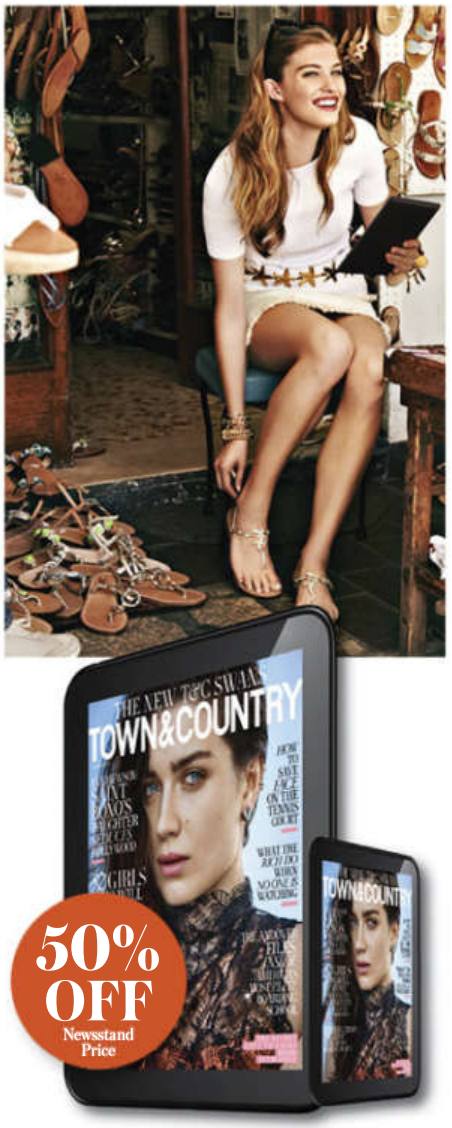
I spent my last meal in Moscow in front of a plate of really quite palatable rye blini. At the adjacent table four men in snugly buttoned suits demolished their own blini with forest mushrooms and quail eggs, chased them with shots of Beluga Noble vodka, and gestured emphatically for service when their glasses grew empty, bringing the index finger and thumb close together to indicate another hundred grams. A waitress in a kind of postmodern chambermaid costume glided to their table with platters of venison pelmeni—boiled dumplings that are to vodka what a jockey is to a horse. And so the men hunched over their plates, going to work on the pelmeni with minimal commentary and more rounds of Beluga. We were at the Grand Café Doctor Zhivago, a quick stroll from Lenin's mausoleum, and it was 11 a.m.

The restaurant's peculiar name—a jumble of Parisian glitz and Boris Pasternak's novel—was the first indication that we were in for more gleefully weird Moscow dining. The room was upholstered in crimson and oatmeal and decorated with Socialist Realist frescoes of industrious maidens. A hefty multipointed star was suspended from the ceiling like a satellite returning from space. Above the tables a pair of identical life-size plaster statues of Soviet schoolgirls faced each other in the manner of temple guardians. They drummed on drums with a look of patriotic ecstasy; crimson blindfolds bound their eyes. Taking a swig of kvas, a fermented bread beverage that's slightly reminiscent of root beer, I wondered whether the statues were intended to be a political statement, nostalgic kitsch, or just a really ambitious exercise in color coordination.

This question didn't seem to vex the men beside me, who happened to be deputies of the State Duma, the lower house of Russia's parliament, which of late has been a human rubber stamp for the president's edicts. Many deputies eat and drink at the Grand Café Doctor Zhivago, because the State Duma convenes nearby. Every once in a while the legislators—or "servants of the people" in the ironic local parlance—turned in their seats to take in the splendid view of the Voskresensky Gates dispersing tourists from Red Square, and of Marshal Zhukov on his bronze stallion, commanding the enemy to halt. It was a warm day in late March, a cause for joy, one of those days when the city looks as radiant and hopeful as a bride. Suddenly, one of the deputies, a bald man with a neck like a water main, raised his glass and proclaimed, "To Moscow," his voice surprisingly clear and free of irony. The other deputies smiled, ready to toast the capital with manful drafts of vodka. Caught up in the moment, I raised my glass too. «

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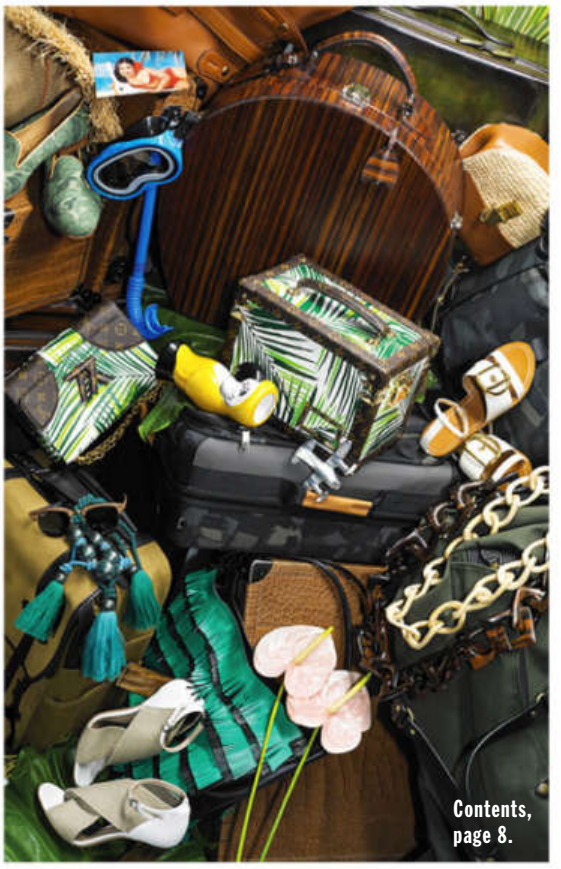
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STORIED HISTORY *Love in the Afternoon*, starring Audrey Hepburn and Gary Cooper, was filmed in the hotel.

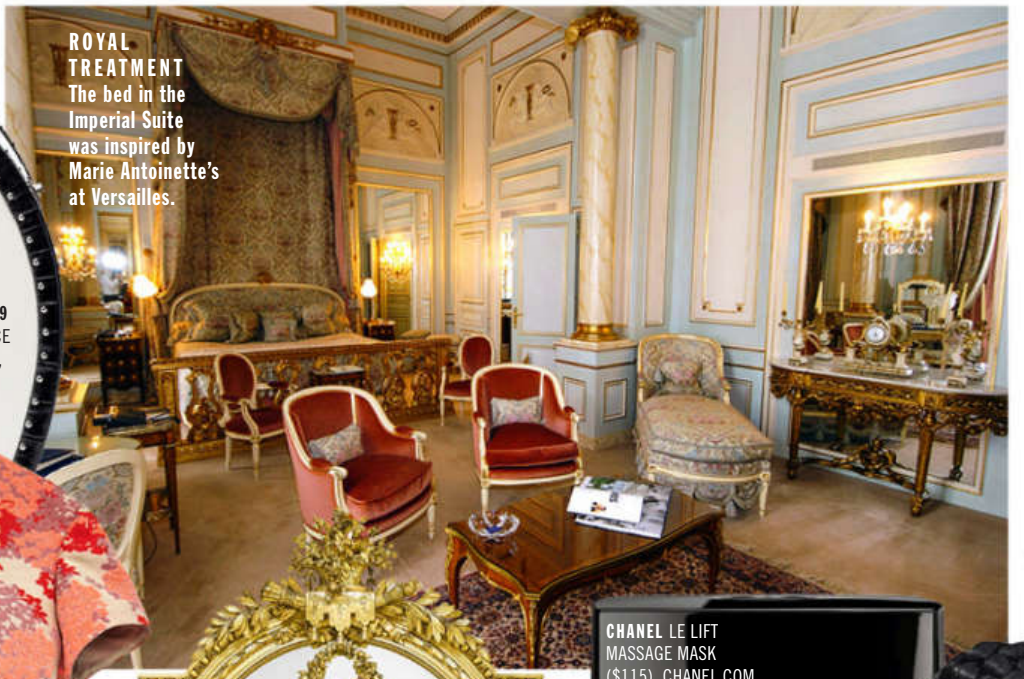
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BREAKFAST IN BED

Morning GLORY

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